# EXPERIENCE

OF

# GERMAN METHODIST PREACHERS.

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED

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WITH AN

INTRODUCTION BY CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D.,

AND A

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE BY L. L. HAMLINE, D. D.

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# PREFACE.

THE narratives contained in the following pages were furnished me by their respective authors, nearly all of whom wrote in the German language. In making the translations into English, slight changes in the phraseology have, in a few instances, been made, yet not so as to convey any meaning different from that intended by the author. The translations, it is admitted, might have been made to wear a smoother English dress; but it was thought best to change the peculiar idioms and forms of expression as little as possible. In a few instances I have been compelled to abridge the communications, where a detailed account of the progress of the German mission work was given. But most of all I regret being compelled to omit several sketches, lest the work should be extended to undue proportions.

My object has been to present to the public a volume of experience, in reference to a very important point in the character of a Christian minister—an evangelical conversion. The question has sometimes been asked, "Where did the Methodist Church get all these German preachers?" And some, not very friendly to our operations among the Germans, have come to the conclusion that they

were mostly disaffected or refused preachers from other denominations, and therefore not to be relied upon. The reader will find in the following pages that these men have been mostly awakened, converted, and brought forward into the ministry according to the customs and usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He will not fail to notice that this work has gradually increased till our German missionaries are in almost every part of our country where German settlements have been made.

There are often allusions to the Lutheran Church, and to the loose morals of her clergymen. These have reference to the National Church in Germany, where unconverted, and often ungodly, ministers are placed over the people. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is in a very different condition; and among the so-called "New measure party" there is much of the life and power of true godliness. There has also been a great change in Germany within the last ten or fifteen years. A new spiritual life is diffusing itself throughout the National Church, and the light of divine truth is gradually dispelling the clouds of a rationalistic philosophy.

ADAM MILLER.

MOUNT PLEASANT, IOWA,
*January* 17, 1859.

# INTRODUCTION.

I TAKE great pleasure in introducing to the American public the following volume, which contains narratives of remarkable conversions to God, and these so connected with a cause that has told, and will tell, I doubt not, to great advantage on the evangelization of Germans in America; and this seems no more than a mere introduction to what is to be accomplished in Germany itself. Since the rise of this great movement we see the beginnings of others of a smaller character among the various branches of the Scandinavian people, whose first converts in America are even now laboring in the father-lands for the conversion of their brethren there.

As introductory to this volume, I will take leave to present a few historical remarks in reference to Wesley's first acquaintance with the Germans, as well as some observations on the theme of Dr. Miller's narrative.

In the year 1735, on the 14th day of October, Mr. Wesley set sail from England as a missionary to America. On the 17th day of the same month he commenced the study of the German language, in order to converse with the Germans, twenty-six of whom were on board. On the 21st he joined with

the Germans in their public services. On Sabbath, January 25th, while the ship encountered a terrible storm, and serious apprehensions were felt for the safety of the ship, he saw the pious Germans calm amidst the ragings of the storm, and found, upon inquiry, that their calmness was owing to their strong faith in God's mercy, which he then felt and acknowledged he had not. After his arrival in America on the 7th of February, Mr. Spangenberg put some close questions to Mr. Wesley, in reference to his acceptance with God through a living faith in Christ, and on the following Monday related to him his own experience, which had a further effect to awaken Wesley to the knowledge of the great truth by which he afterward awakened all England from spiritual lethargy.

After an absence of more than two years, Mr. Wesley returned to England, declaring that he had gone to America to convert the Indians, and in the mean time learned from these pious Germans that he was not converted himself. On the 4th of March, 1738, Mr. Wesley found Peter Boehler with his brother at Oxford, "by whom," says he, "in the hand of the great God, on Saturday, the 5th, I was clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved with the full Christian salvation."

The instructions given to Mr. Wesley by this pious German minister were of great advantage to him. Under the ministrations of Boehler, Wesley commenced preaching, as he called it, the "new

doctrine." On the 26th of April, 1738, he says: "Peter Boehler walked with me a few miles, and exhorted me not to stop short of the grace of God;" and Wednesday, May 3d, he says: "My brother had a long and particular conversation with Peter Boehler, and it now pleased God to open his eyes, so that he also saw clearly what was the nature of that one true living faith whereby alone, 'through grace, we are saved.'"

Not satisfied with these frequent interviews with the pious Germans, whom he had met in America and England, he resolved to visit Germany; and accordingly, on the 13th of June, 1738, he set out with the view of visiting the pious German Moravians at Herrnhutt. On his arrival among these German Moravians Mr. Wesley gained increasing light and strength, and translated some of their hymns into the English language. The 437th hymn in our standard Hymn-Book is one of these. The original is introduced into the German Hymn-Book as the 18th.

When Mr. Wesley returned to England, preaching the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, the Lord owned and blessed his labors, so that in a few years a host of strong men were raised up, both in and out of the Established Church, who stood as living witnesses to the truths they taught.

Mr. Wesley at an early day collected accounts of the awakening and conversion of a number of his fellow-laborers, and published a book called the "Preachers' Experience." And now, after a little over one hundred years, we have seen Methodism

spreading over England and America, and over many of the isles of the seas and foreign lands. While God has long permitted us to enjoy these blessings as a nation speaking the English language, he finally has also opened a highway for the introduction of the doctrine and usages of Methodism in this as well as in the father-land. Our missionaries are now traveling over some of the same ground, and preaching and distributing books and tracts in the same towns and cities through which Wesley traveled over a hundred years ago. The materials for the following work have been collected, translated, and arranged by Dr. Miller, to show the true Wesleyan and spiritual character of these missionary labors. The Methodist Church, both in England and America, owes a debt to Germany which she ought to pay.

In the following work we have not only an account of the awakening, conversion, and call to the ministry of a number of our most prominent German missionaries, but also such explanations and remarks as to give the reader a correct synopsis of the rise and progress of our missions among the Germans. There are also to be found in this work some remarkable instances of the awakening and conversion of some of the private members of the Church, showing how the grace of God was manifested in sustaining them under the persecutions which they were compelled to endure.

As Dr. Miller was himself one among the first missionaries, and the first native-born American who joined Dr. Nast in his labors among his countrymen,

and as he appears to have been led into this work by a remarkable providence, he has very properly given his own experience more in detail than others. Having myself had a knowledge of the community to which he refers, and of the strictness of their rules, it may be considered a great manifestation of God's grace to deliver him from this darkness and bring him into the light of the Gospel.

But I must not enlarge. Let the reader peruse this volume, and he will find an amount of matter respecting religious awakenings and conversions of a truly-apostolic character. It is a book for America, Germany, and England. It should be bought and read by many thousands in these countries. I need not exhort any here to buy this book, for I am confident that it will be bought and read in great numbers. It will tell its own story and diffuse a good spirit in the mind of every reader. And yet I believe it is only a mere introductory narrative of what will become one of the most important religious movements of the evangelical and orthodox Church of Christ.

CHARLES ELLIOTT.

*Iowa Wesleyan University, January* 1, 1859.

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# EXPERIENCE

OF

# GERMAN METHODIST PREACHERS.

## PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

BY REV. L. L. HAMLINE, D. D.

### THE DUTY OF BELIEVING AND CONFESSING.

With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.—ROMANS x, 10.

IT is true, as Christ has said, that "Wisdom is justified of her children." Those doctrines of the Christian revelation which annoy the unregenerate, become as "marrow and fatness" to them who are born of God. The believer can bear witness. Perhaps, before conversion, nothing perplexed him more than faith; whereas, after conversion, nothing filled him with greater admiration. Then he could realize the force of those words, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

Confession, as well as faith, is to many a "stone of stumbling." Christians attach an importance to both, which, in the view of unbelievers, is wholly unaccountable. Unsanctified reason is confounded that righteousness should be wrapped up in faith, and

salvation be made to hinge on confession. Yet God has so ordained. And if these connections are mysterious and even repulsive to the unbelieving, they are simple as well as grateful to him who enjoys their saving benefits: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant."

The text presents for discussion FAITH and CONFESSION, with the *Scriptural relations or dependencies of each.*

I. *Faith*—that faith which is "unto righteousness"—is, in the language of the text, believing "with the heart." In other words, it is such a belief in divine revelation as involves not only a conviction of its truth, but a hearty delight in it. As thus defined, it is,

1. *Simple belief.* This is an office of the mind. It is the mere perception of truth as such, regardless of its bearing on our interests or affections. Applied to Christianity, it is crediting the Scriptures as a divine revelation, with all the truths which their just interpretation inculcates; and especially those Gospel statements which may be aptly called the *test truths* of the system, one of which is named in the context: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath *raised him from the dead*, thou shalt be saved." Not that crediting this isolated fact would save a man, but that the confession of this offensive feature of the Gospel, in the face of persecution, implied a full Christian faith. But, according to the text, saving faith is more than this simple belief. It is,

2. Believing "*with the heart.*" It is gust as well as vision. It not only credits, but relishes the truths of revelation. It is not only convinced, for instance, that Christ is risen from the dead, but, like Mary at the sepulcher, is *joyfully* convinced; and, in the surprise of rapt affection, cries out with Thomas, "My Lord and my God!" Let us dwell a moment on this feature of saving faith.

Propositions addressed to men's understandings produce a great variety of inward states—in the mind—among others—belief and unbelief; and in the affections, gratification and regret. How various the effects produced by a series of reports made to an avaricious merchant concerning one of his ships at sea—as, first, that she is lost, with crew and cargo; which, believed, inflicts pain. Second, that she outrode the storm, and is safe, which, *dis*believed, produces equal disappointment. But at last the ship comes in, and the commander in person reports her safety and successes. This is credited with joy.

The first is an example of speculative faith, like his who credits Christianity, but feels that it is a sentence of condemnation to him. Of such there are thousands. They are not the absolutely stupid, who scarcely take the pains to believe or disbelieve; but are persons of more serious convictions, whose faith disturbs their consciences—who, moved by the Spirit, concede the truth of Christianity with some solicitude, but find their tastes and views of interest at war with their convictions. Their belief *without the heart* is an important element of faith; but, of itself, it can neither comfort nor save. It belongs in common to anxious sinners, undone reprobates, and fallen

angels—"Thou believest there is one God; thou doest well. The devils also believe and tremble."

It may be questioned if the second example applies to our theme. Yet there are men who say they wish to believe the Bible, if they could find reasonable proofs of its divine inspiration. "Wish to believe and can not!" It is possible. For we learn that men may "resist the Holy Ghost"—may resist till they are forsaken to blindness of mind—are given "over to believe a lie." Then light becomes darkness, and darkness light unto them. They who "would believe the Bible, if they could," should look, alarmed, into their own religious history, and consider if they have not armed themselves against believing. They who first "*turn* away their ears from hearing truth," may at last "*be* turned unto fables." If we struggle for years to disbelieve the Gospel, no wonder that, God-forsaken, we at last make it out.

The third example illustrates saving faith, which, as stated, is the joyful belief of Gospel truth—which credits Christian doctrine as the testimony of God, and exults over it as good news from heaven. Such faith the Psalmist had: "Thy word is very pure; therefore thy servant loveth it." "I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great spoil."

3. This faith has *Scriptural limits*. As a speculation, it credits *all* Bible truth; as an affection, it relishes or delights in all. The believing heart is docile. It first seeks to know, and then "receives with meekness the ingrafted word." There is an easy faith, which, not content with the old, sets itself to frame a new Bible. It expurgates and adds. It fondly canonizes one series of texts and sharpens

criticism against another series. It is a bold operator. It leans with composure over the Bible; moves and cuts, light-fingered, through and through its pages; and in its progress makes and unmakes worlds, quenches and kindles hells, or changes the date and venue of these small things at pleasure!

True faith is quite another thing. It will not have a syllable added or blotted in God's book. It abhors all expurgations. It will not tolerate tradition as a supplement to Scripture. Its language is, "The Bible, the *whole* Bible, and *nothing but* the Bible!" He who has this faith can say, "I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold." "How sweet is thy word unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth."

4. This faith embraces *self-application.* What it credits it also appropriates to its legitimate end; otherwise it could not be a *hearty* faith. How can we cordially embrace the averments, while we decline the Gospel uses, of God's truth? Does not the same authority which attests to us the truth, assure to us also its uses and its efficacy? Take the promise, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Here are three particulars. The first is faith: "*Believe.*" The second is the *object* of faith: "*On the Lord Jesus Christ.*" The third is the *efficacy* of faith: "*And thou shalt be saved.*" Must not faith in this promise embrace each of these particulars? If it leave out the second, "Jesus Christ," can it be a hearty faith? No more can it be hearty if it leave out the third particular, "Thou shalt be saved." To doubt the *efficacy* of the promise as much dishon-

ors God, as to doubt its *whole truth*, seeing both are vouched for by the very same authority.

But cordially to believe each particular of this promise is so to believe it as to secure or to *experience* its efficacy—because the only authorized method to obtain the virtue of it is to "believe it with the heart." Observe, however, we say cordially, or "with the heart;" as this qualification is the safeguard of the doctrine. For faith which thus involves the affections is divinely wrought—is "of the operation of God."

It follows, then, in regard to thus believing with the heart that it is a state of salvation—not of *finished* salvation, but of "*righteousness*," which prepares for, and is an element of it. This is no more than to say that faith in this promise is such a state as God has pledged shall be the adjunct of faith. And here we are brought to

II. *The Scriptural relation of faith and righteousness.*

Righteousness, in the text, has its evangelical import, and means that freedom from guilt which follows pardon, and that moral purity which flows from "sanctification of the Spirit." Faith in Christ is the condition on which these are received. The text declares, "With the heart man believes unto [both these branches of] righteousness." Not that faith justifies by its intrinsic merit, or sanctifies by its inherent power. The words are, "Believeth *unto* righteousness." The merit is in Christ. The righteousness is not *in*, but *through* faith, which derives to the soul a gracious dispensation of God's pardoning and purifying love. But as faith, and faith alone,

can reach this righteousness, it is known in Scripture as "the righteousness of faith."

As to pardon, the Bible teaches us, "By Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." In regard to purity the apostle says, "And put no difference between us and them, *purifying their hearts by faith.*" "That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among all them that are *sanctified through faith* that is in me." These, with many other texts, clearly show that both pardon and sanctification are received through faith. We may add, each blessing is enjoyed whenever the promises which specifically pledge the one or the other are believed *with the heart.*

It should be stated that the words, "man believeth unto righteousness," have not only an inclusive, but an *exclusive* force. Besides proclaiming the efficacy of faith, they enforce the inefficacy of all other things, except as other things involve or infer faith. This is plain from the connection. The preceding verses array the righteousness of the law, as to its saving efficacy, against the righteousness of faith, and condemn the Jews for going about to establish the former, called "their own righteousness," instead of submitting themselves to the latter, called "the righteousness of God." In this connection the text clearly and forcibly denies that righteousness can be

to salvation but "through sanctification of the Spirit and *belief of the truth.*"

None, then, can devise a substitute for faith, which has not a concurrent but an exclusive jurisdiction, so to speak, over the grace which saves. All merit is in Christ. All ways of seizing it are one; namely, faith. We can acquire no merit by any amount of effort or penance on our part. The holiest saints that live, or *ever* lived, are so far behind all works of deserving that they have no plea for *self*-security, to say nothing of those rich supererogations which are cheaply set over to the credit of the needy, whose recanted heresies do not yield to the ordinary remedies. *All* are needy, and all are guilty. "All have sinned," says the apostle, "and come short of the glory of God." All, then, must fly to the cross. Looking to be saved in other ways is to reproach that very cross; for "if righteousness come by the law, then is Christ dead in vain."

As to our guilt, so far from being *removed*, not a grain's weight can it be *lightened* by the sorest grief for sin; by reformations the most exact; by self-denials the most rigid; by penances the most abject, painful, and protracted. Should we commence all these in early childhood, and pursue them unremittingly till death, so far from saving, without faith they would involve us in growing guilt and ruin; and the law which we "thought to be unto life," we should find "to be unto death." All such struggles after life by the law would proclaim our disparaging views of the Gospel; for, like Judaism, it would be going about to establish our own righteousness instead of submitting to the righteousness of God. From these

self-righteous deeds and self-denials, we must turn to naked trust in Christ; or the Gospel, so full of mercy, will denounce in thunder-tones, "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." "He that believeth not, shall be damned."

To this wholesome doctrine there is nothing to object. Other things than faith may seem to be made conditions of salvation; but they are all so related to faith, as to make the latter really the condition. Sometimes salvation seems to hinge on repentance; as, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" but repentance is connected with faith as its forerunner. So of prayer: the context says, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved; but," it is added, "how shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed?" showing that prayer *involves* faith. James would seem to teach that we are saved by works; but he only means that faith, without works, is simple belief, and not belief "with the heart." His doctrine is, that, unless our deeds indicate our faith, our faith is defective, and can not save our souls. And here we pass to another branch of the subject; namely,

III. *Confession*, which is also named in the text as a condition of salvation; but which, as we shall see when it comes in place, has this efficacy simply as the cherisher and exemplifier of faith. Let us now glance at the *nature*, the *matter*, and the *mode* of confession.

1. Its *nature* is not determined by the meaning of the word; which denotes assent to imputations on our conduct, or the voluntary exposure of our evil

in the Bible. The Israelites thus confessed, under the reproofs of faithful prophets; and thus we are told to "confess our faults one to another."

The confession named in the text is not of crime but rather of religious grace and virtue; namely, faith in Christ. Yet it is confession; for it is, by some, denounced as crime. Moreover, ancient forms of martyrdom often challenged recantation with the promise of escape; and to avow faith in Christ, under such appalling circumstances, might well be called "confession." But this avowal was confession, whether with or without challenge; and so it is to this day. If without, it is sometimes called *profession;* but not from Scripture warrant. Thomas confessed, when he cried, "My Lord and my God!" as well as Stephen, who testified before enraged foes. And if the attending trials make it a "confession," there are crosses besides martyrdom. Derision and reproach can wound as well as wild beasts; and when the former assail us at the sacred fireside, they may well claim for us the honors of confession.

But, if challenge were necessary, we have it from God himself, who commands us to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear." If not the foes, the friends of Christ will want the reason of our hope; and shall we not be as ready to meet the requirements of Christian love, as the martyrs were to endure the demands of stern and wrathful persecution?

2. As to the *matter* of confession, the context seems to limit it to Christ's resurrection: "If thou confess—and believe in thine heart that *God hath raised*

*him from the dead.*" To understand this, we must regard the *spirit* of it. Certain acts, in given circumstances, prove sincere piety, when, in different circumstances, they would prove nothing at all. Look at Daniel. Kneeling for prayer by his window, displayed, in the circumstances, heroic zeal for God; but take away the king's decree and den of lions, and suppose his prayers offered up in the city of Jerusalem, where the most profane Jew observed the custom, and this act of Daniel loses all its force. Another example is the conduct of the three "Hebrew Worthies." Not to worship idols on Mount Zion was common to all classes, whether pious or profane. But, in Babylon, where nations bowed down in submission to royal edicts enforced by the terrors of a burning fiery furnace, for three captive strangers to resist, and hurl defiance at the monarch in the name of Israel's God, was periling every earthly interest, and afforded the strongest proof of sanctity and zeal.

In the light of these examples how evident it is, that confessing one offensive feature of Christianity may involve a full confession of the system. What that feature is must be determined by the state of public sentiment. In one age or region it may depend on "caste;" in another, on the practice of polygamy; and in a third, on false histories or "traditions," which cherish national vanity or profane superstitions, and are in conflict with the doctrines or chronologies of Scripture.

In Paul's day the resurrection was peculiarly offensive, and concentered on itself the sum total of the odium which fell upon Christianity. Christ was slain as a deceiver. Except by his disciples he was ab-

horred above mankind. His resurrection would not only draw after it his Godhead, but would infer upon his crucifiers unexampled guilt. It was therefore *the* question of the times—the point of desperate conflict between Christ's friends and foes. When persecution raged, it was directed to that point, and met by the specific testimony of the unresisting martyrs—a testimony cheerfully sealed in their own blood. Surely this was a plenary confession, involving faith in Christ's Godhead, atonement, and offices—in the inward work of the Spirit—in every doctrine of his word, and in his promises, even to that "exceeding precious" one, "*He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.*"

Thus the brief form of confession in the context was made all-comprehensive by those existing circumstances which, whenever they return, will stamp that form with its original force and meaning. But to confess Christ's resurrection in the midst of present Christendom, would scarcely pledge a man to decent orthodoxy, and might leave him suspected of the grossest infidelity. Of course true confession must be made more explicit. When popular sentiment moves men not to deny but acknowledge Christ, as the true God and risen Savior, if the disciple would bear the cross of true confession, he must go some steps beyond that unoffensive summary, to those features which now come under the ban of public prejudice. Maintaining these with the firmness of a martyr, he will show that he is not ashamed of Christ or of his word; for Religion has still unwelcome features, and always will have to unsanctified minds. Moreover, she will be subject to that milder persecu-

tion which, when it does not bind and burn, will turn its victim over to contempt and ridicule.

An ingenious writer hints that religious persecution has passed through several stages, answering to the progress of divine revelation. Its first aim was God the Father, in that divine unity which stood opposed to idolatry and polytheism, and in defense of which so many prophets gave their lives. Next it assailed God the Son; first in his own sacred person, and then in that great "cloud of witnesses" who "loved not their lives unto the death." Now it wars against God the Holy Ghost, by deriding his gracious work upon the souls of men.

Is there no ground for these distinctions? What doctrinal test can now separate the true Christian from an orthodox, guilty world? The unity of God was a badge to the Jew, but none to Christ's disciple, for all Jewry held it; and to Christ's very crucifiers it might have been said, "Ye believe there is one God—the devils also believe." The resurrection was, in turn, a badge to the apostles, but it can be none to us; for now to the worst blasphemer it may be said, "Thou believest Christ is risen—devils also believe." These ancient tests are obsolete in Christendom, unless sometimes arrayed against a haggard infidelity which lingers here and there in low and vulgar haunts.

What then is now required? Confessions of Christ in the work of the Holy Spirit—that Comforter which he sent to "take of the things of Christ, and show them unto us"—confessions from living witnesses that the Spirit reproves, regenerates, and "sanctifies wholly," through faith in Jesus Christ. The Jews testified of God's works in their day: the apostles, of

his miraculous deeds in the commencement of Christianity; and what belongs to us? We can recount no plagues like those which smote Egypt, nor delivering miracles like those of the exodus. Yet God has not withdrawn his presence from our world. He "works a work" in our day. "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh." This he now does, as we have seen and known, convincing and regenerating—"sprinkling clean water upon" us that we may "be clean." And of the plagues of sin within us, worse than the plagues of Egypt—of the rod, not of Aaron, but of Christ smiting our rocky hearts and causing the waters of repentance and then of joy to gush forth—we too are witnesses.

Outward miracles in our day almost cease to be disputed. Other matters are now drawn into the issues which separate and antagonize the Church and the world. Christ's Messiahship is yielded; but the Spirit's gracious work is denied and derided. Not the advent, but its *aim*, provokes man's enmity; and this has become the issue which must next be settled, not merely with the world, but with formal Christianity. This in turn is *the* question—the point at which Persecution aims, with such annoying subtilties as her malice may employ when she dares not use force; and, as faithful witnesses, we must shape our testimony to her present modes of assault. Of what avail is testimony which does not touch existing issues?

3. The text prescribes the *mode* of confession; and the mistakes committed on this point show how im-

portant it is that the question should be settled by divine authority.

(1.) Some say, "My position in the Church testifies." Not so. For to this day "they are not all Israel who are of Israel." The visible Church is not mainly composed of Christians. It may be that nineteen-twentieths of her members know nothing of vital religion; and even her Protestant branches are fields in which the tares and wheat "grow together until the harvest." Membership in such a Church will not be received as an explicit avowal of saving faith in Christ. A Church is condemned as heartless and Christless for general silence on the subject of experimental religion; and if an unwitnessing *Church* fall under such reproach, an unwitnessing member of it can surely fare no better. And what if Church membership were a profession of Christian "hope?" are we not commanded to "give a *reason* of that hope?"

(2.) Others say, "Let your *life* testify." Testify what? If well ordered, it may testify the purity of your morals, and the innocency of your social dispositions. It may prove you honest, industrious, and neighborly; but all these you may be without regeneration or the love of God. How shall it be known *why* you are honest—whether grace or nature, the love of Christ or the love of praise, makes you so? Your life testify! Absurd! As well might the blameless conduct of a witness at the bar be offered in reply to fifty cross questions.

(3.) The mode is fixed by God's authority. "With the *mouth* confession is made unto salvation;" that is, in words spoken or written—for in different circumstances they are equal. This has been the usual mode

from the beginning. When Noah built the ark, he mingled his testimony with his daily toil, warning a wicked generation of its impending doom. Those "holy men of old," the patriarchs and prophets, "*spake* as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" some of them enjoying his infallible guidance. The Psalmist wished to "*declare*" what God had done for his soul. He prays, "O Lord, open thou my *lips*, and my *mouth* shall show forth thy praise." In harmony with the text, which connects faith and confession, he says, "I believed, and therefore have I spoken." The New Testament saints followed this example; for the apostle says, "We also believe, and therefore *speak*." Stephen testified with his expiring breath, and Paul records his experience in its remarkable details—visions, power, and all—not leaving out his call to preach, nor even his visit to the third heavens. It seems he was wont to relate all in his sermons, and that before kings; not standing on his own apostolic dignity, nor anxious about the violations of courtly etiquette.

We ought to join the Church; else we reject God's sacraments, and choose the world before God's people. Like persons brought into court, we are summoned into the Church to be qualified as witnesses by sacramental oaths. In the Church we should behave with the utmost circumspection, so that, our veracity unquestioned, we may testify with the utmost effect. But all this does not fulfill the demand of the summons. Having the position and the qualifications of a witness, we must next give our testimony, and not stand in the Church like "mutes" before the court.

IV. It remains to notice the *relations or dependencies of confession.* The text ascribes salvation to it.

But the Scriptures teach, as we have seen, that faith is the only real or efficacious *condition* of being saved, as Christ's merit through the Spirit is the only efficacious *cause.* Let us consider then more carefully the shapings of the text.

"With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," may seem to institute a sort of double proportion; namely, "*as faith is to righteousness, so is confession to salvation.*" But we must be guarded in our understanding of "*so is*," not receiving it in its precise technical force, or we shall do violence to Scripture. Its force is to define the *certainty of results*, but not the *principle which works those results.*

It may be difficult to illustrate this distinction, which, metaphysical as it may be in aspect, is vital both in theology and in experience, as every thing is which affects our views of faith. If a man should say to his neighbor, "The fountain by yonder hill supplies water to the vale, and these minute streams revive the withered herbage," two relations—connecting the fountain with the vale, and the streams with the herbage—would be expressed; but two other relations—connecting the fountain with the streams, and the fountain with the herbage—would be implied: and these last, being familiar to our experience, would impress us as forcibly as though they were expressed. So in the text, the relations of faith to righteousness, and of confession to salvation, are expressed; but the relation of faith to confession and to salvation is not expressed. Faith, as a *condition*, bears the same relation to these which the fountain bears to the streams and the refreshed herbage: it gathers into the soul,

from Christ the hidden source, the life-waters of salvation; but confession, as an outward act of faith, renders these life-waters refreshing and beneficent.

In the light of this illustration we may perceive in how different a sense confession and faith are conditions of salvation. Faith is the *real* or efficacious condition; yet, as confession must interpose, like the streams, to attain the end of faith, it is ordinarily as indispensable as faith itself. Even the thief upon the cross not only believed but confessed, suddenly as he was hurried into the presence of his Judge.

But what service does confession render which makes it indispensable? It cherishes and exemplifies our Christian graces. First, it cherishes them, as light and air do the plants which must perish without their influence. For example:

1. Confession promotes *humility*. Tracing our pardon and purification to Christ is conceding our own guilt, pollution, and helplessness. To claim Christ as a Savior, is to proclaim self a sinner. This is a cross against which pride rallies, and which, borne, lays pride in the dust. Confession glories in the cross, which is glorying in self-abasement, yea, in self-crucifixion, as Paul did when the Pharisee was dead in him: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom I am crucified to the world." What he once thought of that in which his humility now gloried, is familiar to us all. When Peter stood in the judgment-hall and warmed himself, confession would not only have humbled, but would have *saved* him.

2. Confession aids *self-consecration*, by dissolving our connection with the world, and breaking up our

union with the creatures. It says, not of the friends, but of the enemies of religion, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." It yields a public pledge to Christ and his Church, and fortifies religious purpose by compelling its worst foes, such as earthly policy and the sense of shame, to become its aids and allies. If the Christian would multiply the cords which bind his sacrifice to the altar, let him often proclaim his purpose to keep it there. God will employ our confessions to lead us out of the world into his closer fellowship. What we feebly bind on earth he will be pleased to bind in heaven, writing on our hearts, "*I will receive you.*"

3. Confession strengthens *faith itself.* Like filial piety, it nourishes its parent. It is to faith like those braces which the juices of the stalk throw out for self-support. Its influence may partly depend on the laws of mind; for such is our mental constitution that avowal fortifies and almost creates conviction. In this way skepticism has been wrought into atheism; for men have become confirmed in infidelity by lightly vindicating it in conversation. And if against evidence a man can talk himself into the belief of fatal error, how much more may he deepen the impressions of truth, when he has reason and conscience on his side to enforce his own avowals? Doubtless, on natural principles, confession strengthens faith.

And so it does evangelically or by the Holy Spirit, under whose gracious culture the renovated heart is like a vine which becomes more fruitful for its pluckings. God will work faith in them who use it for his glory, by standing up in its strength as his unflinching witnesses: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me;

and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God."

Second, confession is the *representative* of faith. It is true that good works execute the same office: "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." Thus the apostle. But important as works are to confirm our testimony, they fail in some respects to represent our Christian graces. They are sometimes unseasonable. Confession is quick, works are slow. That requires a moment; these consume months or years. The thief upon the cross had time *merely* to confess, which, in his circumstances, was "the cup of cold water;" for though his faith could only cast one look at Christ, its confiding exclamation so kindled the Savior's pity that it blazed into trains of light and guided him to paradise.

Works can only give a bird's-eye view of faith. They can not report the minute changes of experience—the trials and assaults, the conflicts, wounds, and triumphs, of the Christian warfare. But confession can map out every turn in the pilgrim's course to Canaan; and, for warning and encouragement to those who follow after, can describe each help and hinderance he meets with in the way. If works lay down the heads of our experience, confession fills up the skeleton.

And we must not forget that confession is itself one of the most important works of faith. It is the *genesis* of them all, and its omission betrays a want of earnestness in religion, a state of heart unfruitful of all good works. He whose zeal does not confess, will limp and lag in other duties. The power which

can not turn her wheels will never move the steamer. As a general rule, the grace which has force enough to act, will move its subject to proclaim God's saving mercies. "I have believed, and therefore have I spoken," was the experience of early times. And so under the Gospel: "We also believe, and therefore speak." Here the word "therefore" involves a vital principle; namely, *faith speaks.* Its very instinct is to vent itself in words. Its birth is usually not in silence, but with the voice of groans; and when the work is finished, and Sabbath calms and raptures now first betide the soul, no wonder if over the new creation there is a "shouting aloud for joy." May not the dying penitent, new-born of the Spirit, be roused by that which moves the sons of God in paradise? "There is joy in heaven over *one* sinner that repenteth."

There is a still-born faith, which should be always silent, for it would be misrepresented by a show of roused affections. What has no inward ardors demands no outward signs. There is a way of *thinking* which men call faith. As it touches not the heart, both heart and lip are still. It moves, like Surgery through a hospital, around the Savior's cross, but with a colder speculation regards the suffering Victim.

The faith which speaks is different. To its renewed affections the cross is a home-tragedy, where science is a mockery, but the yielding heart dissolves amid the groans and death-throes of the atoning Son of God. He who has this faith, believing "*with the heart,*" may sometimes find himself in untoward moods for silence. His musings may kindle fires not easily controlled, which, bursting the barriers of his

own false discretion, will remind him of that saying, "If these should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out." The glorious things revealed, the ardors of his divinely-wrought conviction, and the new creations "unto righteousness," which take his being captive, may render silence inconvenient. Thus it seemed to be with David, in the sixty-sixth Psalm. While his song premeditated joyful offerings in the tabernacle, he felt such sudden overflows of rapture as could not brook the delays and moderations of his plan; and he seemed disposed to hurry up a love-feast in the palace: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul."

How vital, then, is the connection between confession and salvation! Without faith we can not be saved. And confession, as we have seen, must cherish and prove our faith. And, above all, if our faith be of the heart as well as of the intellect, it *will* speak, even as the breath comes and goes by the urgencies of nature. Then let us beware of silence. If it has already grieved the Holy Spirit, till confession is no longer easy and spontaneous as it was at our conversion, let us proceed to enact, as a duty, that which should have been a privilege, and thus recover what is lost. If it is still a privilege, let us not "sell our birthright." Let us be faithful witnesses, and keep back nothing. The text is broad, and covers all experience—not select portions of it which involve no cross, because they invite no reproach. Our confession must be of *God's grace*, whatever it hath wrought in its regenerating, comforting, and sanctifying forms; or, unlike the Psalmist, we hide

God's "righteousness within our hearts," and "withhold his loving-kindness and his truth from the great congregation." We do not "talk of *all* his wondrous works."

It is true that circumstances should be regarded in performing this great duty. To confess perfect love in a large and mixed assembly would be unseasonable; but to do it in a love-feast would be highly proper; for there, unless the Discipline has been grossly violated, it will not be "casting pearls before swine." Rising in such a place to relate God's dealings with us, we should feel that we are as witnesses sworn "to tell the truth, the *whole* truth, and nothing but the truth;" or to "declare *what* he hath done for our souls." This will edify both ourselves and those who hear. The Psalmist not only looked for self-relief, but expected to minister comfort to others. "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord; the *humble shall hear thereof and be glad.*" "From you," says the apostle, "sounded out the word of the Lord; and in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad, so that *we need not to speak any thing.*" This at least borders on declaring that even the necessity of apostolic ministrations was waived by the confessions of the Thessalonian converts. Nor is it strange; for what argument can have the force of simple testimony?

We may say, then, confession "is twice blessed;" is blessed in him that speaks and him that hears. It is a "stream that maketh glad" on every side. Not only does its outflow refresh the house of God, but with a reflex force it returns on the confessor, and sets all inward grace in motion, which occasion the

Holy Spirit seizes to enlarge and fill the channels of his inward life, and sweetly multiply the volume of his graces. May God so enrich us with his abounding grace that, as Paul prayed for Philemon, "*the communication of our faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in us in Christ Jesus!*"

## CHAPTER I.

### ADAM MILLER—AWAKENING AND CONVERSION

In giving an account of the experience of some of our German missionaries, it will perhaps be expected that I should say a few things in reference to myself, and more especially as I was identified with the German missionary work for a number of years. I witnessed its commencement and gradual growth and development from the first efforts of one solitary missionary till the present time, when the work has extended all over the United States, and is even now spreading over the father-land. In connection with my experience, and the experience of our German preachers, I shall make such notes and explanatory remarks as will give the reader an outline of the rise and progress of the work among the Germans.

I was born in the state of Maryland, in the year 1810, and when I was four months old my father moved to the then western wilds of Ohio, with a colony of the stricter sect of the Mennonites, called the *Omish.* As these singular people, in every place where they make settlements, seek to be secluded from intercourse with the society of other people, their aim was to purchase as much of the land as possible in one vicinity, and thus keep together in a kind of community; consequently, the new colony soon increased by emigration from Pennsylvania and Maryland, and

almost the entire neighborhood was made up of these *Omish*, or Mennonites, as they are sometimes called. My parents were members of the society, and strict observers of their many singular rules and customs. My grandfather and two of my uncles were preachers in their Church, and I was early taken to their meetings, and from a child brought up to a strict observance of the rules of the society, which consisted in some peculiar modes of dress and a strict morality, so far as the outward conduct is concerned. Our people were not allowed to go to any religious meetings except our own, and no other preachers were allowed to preach among us. We lived on the outskirts of the settlement, and my father on several occasions went to hear ministers of other denominations preach, for which he was severely censured. He owned a mill, and by mingling with the English neighbors on one side of our place he had become familiar with the English language; but our language in the family, however, was the Pennsylvania German. On one occasion, when I was some fifteen years old, he went to a Methodist quarterly meeting, and came home in the evening very serious, and told us he had heard a sermon on the judgment-day by an Irish preacher by the name of Charles Elliott.* He read to us the text and repeated a number of remarks which he had recollected from the sermon. My mind was early and deeply impressed with the importance of a preparation for a future state. I often wandered in solitary places anxiously wishing

* Our venerable friend, Dr. Elliott, was then presiding elder in the bounds of the Pittsburg district.

to know what to do to be saved; for our preachers talked about a future state, but left us in the dark on the subject of vital godliness. The doctrines of awakening, repentance, conversion, and the witness of the Spirit were not taught to us. A strict morality and a punctilious adherence to rules of the Church, modes of dress, etc., were considered a sufficient passport to heaven.

When I was between sixteen and seventeen years of age my father again went on a Sabbath day to a Methodist meeting. The preacher on the occasion was Rev. Joseph M'Dowell, then a local preacher, now presiding elder of Mount Pleasant district, Iowa conference. On his way from meeting he traveled several miles with the preacher, and in conversation with him found that he was teaching school in a neighboring village. On his return home he told me—as I was then lame from a dislocated ankle-joint and not able to work on the farm—that he would send me to the Methodist preacher to school to learn the English language thoroughly. I was much delighted with the proposition, and awaited with great anxiety the day for my departure from home to go to school. When I made my appearance at the school-house, with my singular Mennonite costume, I attracted the especial attention of the teacher and the scholars. Established in the religious principles of our order, I was not afraid of being misled, and had not the most distant idea of becoming a Methodist. I soon became much attached to my teacher; and, as I made rapid progress in my English education, out of courtesy I went to hear him preach. I became very singularly affected under the preaching,

and often wept profusely when I did not understand more than half of what was said.

My teacher now began to instruct me in private; and, during noon spells and recess, explained to my dark mind the nature of true religion. I soon concluded that if he was right we had all been wrong, and if there was a religion which afforded peace to a troubled mind I would have it. Soon after my awakening to a sense of my lost condition, my teacher told me that there was a quarterly meeting not far off, and invited me to go with him, which I cheerfully did. "Now," said he, "when we get to the meeting on Saturday night, they will have a bench out in front of the pulpit, to which they will invite all seekers of religion," and advised me to go forward. I at once agreed; and, as soon as the Saturday night sermon was over, the bench was put out in front of the pulpit, and no sooner had the invitation been given than I started and kneeled down, all alone at first—my heart all broken up, willing to do any thing to obtain this religion that my kind teacher had talked so much to me about—but now my troubles thickened around me. I had never been at such a meeting; in the moment of excitement I had forgotten many things that had been told me, and what to say I did not know; but, in an instant, it occurred to me I would listen with attention, and what I heard others say that I would say; and, of course, would be right. Just as I had formed this purpose, a pious sister commenced clapping her hands, and shouting "glory to God," at the top of her voice, and with that I commenced, in broken accents of half German and half English, to cry glory to God; and, to follow up the whole, com-

menced clapping my hands. My teacher soon came to me, and asked me whether I had found peace. To which I replied, "No; I feel very bad; I am a lost sinner," and continued to repeat the words I had caught from the pious sister.

He said to me, "You must not say glory, but say 'Lord, have mercy on me a sinner!'" I soon did according to his instruction; but, at the same time, commenced to claim religion on the ground of my past moral life. Instead of trusting in the Savior, I trusted in my own good works. My grief and distress of mind became almost indescribable. I have often since thought I might have exclaimed with propriety:

"A darker soul did never yet
Thy promised help implore."

I have mentioned my embarrassment, and my mistake in my first efforts to pray in an hour of great excitement and mental agitation, to show that great allowance should be made, and a great deal of patience and forbearance should be exercised toward those who had never received proper religious instruction in earlier days. What may appear perfectly plain to a person who has frequently visited such meetings, will not appear so to one who is just emerging from darkness and superstition, deeply sensible of his lost condition, anxiously inquiring the way to life. Such was my case; I knew that I was in the wrong way, and anxiously sought the right way. I looked on the right hand and on the left for help, and was willing to do all in my power to be delivered from my sins.

After the quarterly meeting I returned to the school, but could not study, my distress of mind being

so great. My father heard of it, but such were the impressions that had been made upon his mind, by the few Methodist sermons which he had heard, that he would not oppose me. My relations generally became bitterly opposed to me. I went to brother M'Dowell and asked whether the Methodists would receive me into their Church. He told me they would take me on trial, for which I was very thankful; and, at the first offer, I gave my hand and my name to the Church.

I had now torn myself loose from the community in which I had been brought up. The family where I boarded were irreligious and opposed me. My teacher took me into his own house, instructed and directed me in the way to life; and, after three months of struggling against unbelief and the powers of darkness, the Lord granted me peace and pardon, the witness of the Spirit, and the joys of his salvation.

I soon commenced to talk to others about religion. My progress in learning English was very rapid. The preachers and others of our Church wished my father to interpose his parental authority to bring me back. This he refused to do, from fear that he might do wrong; but, at the same time, concluded not to help nor encourage me. My grandfather soon after my conversion was taken sick; and, on his death-bed, called me to talk to me and entreat me to return to the community I had left. The Lord gave me great liberty and power to talk to him, and to explain to him the nature of repentance and conversion. He wept profusely, and seemed anxious to hear me talk about this new way. He said to me he had never fully given me up for lost, to which I replied, "No, I am not

lost, but saved through God's mercy." I finally asked the privilege of praying with him, to which he readily consented. The power of the Lord came down, and I believe the venerable old man, of eighty years, looked to Jesus and found peace in believing. Many of the members of his own Church stood around and looked with astonishment on the scene. I was strengthened in the faith. The old man was comforted, and when I left the room his aged wife followed me into the yard, and wished me to make to her some further explanation about this religion, which I cheerfully did. She was much affected, and I went on my way rejoicing. I could now bear the persecutions to which I was subject, with a glad heart. The Methodist Church was my home; the members of the Church all treated me kindly; Christ was my Savior, and heaven my aim:

"Jesus, all the day long,
Was my joy and my song."

In some six months after my conversion the society voted me license to exhort. This I soon commenced to do in broken and poor English, but my lameness, which still continued, prevented my going far from home. I had a constant and almost inexpressible desire to do something for the cause of Christ; but my limited education, and other apparently insurmountable difficulties, did not allow me to entertain the thought of becoming a minister of the Gospel. Yet I formed this purpose—to use all the means within my reach for the improvement of my mind: my want of earlier opportunities was my misfortune; my neglect to improve the future would be my fault.

In the following summer there was a camp meeting held near Canton, Ohio, twenty-five miles from my father's residence, to which I had a great desire to go, but knew of no mode of conveyance, and such was my lameness that I could scarcely walk two or three miles without great difficulty. My father consented that I should go, but would not allow me a horse to ride. I however resolved to go. My sister baked me a few biscuits, and with six cents in my pocket I started on a journey of twenty-five miles, though scarcely able to walk three; yet I had strong confidence that some way would be provided for me to get there. When half a mile from home I was overtaken by a man in an empty wagon, driving along at a rapid rate. When he came up with me he suddenly halted and asked where I was going; I told him I had started for camp meeting, near Canton. "Get into my wagon," said he; "I am going right by there on my way to Cleveland, and you are welcome to ride in my wagon; I am not a Methodist," he continued, "but nearly all my relations are, and I am a friend to the Methodists." I gladly accepted the offer, and was taken to camp meeting as comfortably as if I had been able to hire my own conveyance. On the way an incident occurred that affected me very much. Stopping at a house to get a drink of water, the lady of the house asked me from what place I had come. I replied, "From Shanesville." "Do tell me," said she, "have you heard of the young Mennonite or Omish boy who was converted at Shanesville some time ago? How is he getting along?" I at once knew she was inquiring after my own history without knowing to whom she was talking. I merely

gave her to understand that the young man was doing well, and left the house rejoicing in the great things which the Lord had done for me. At camp meeting the brethren received me very kindly, and I was without want during the meeting. I had now in a good degree changed my manner of dress, and no longer attracted so much attention as when I first went to Methodist meetings. This camp meeting was a glorious one, and a great blessing to my soul. At the close of the meeting I had made no arrangement to get home, and was not able to walk the distance, and knew of no wagon from our neighborhood. Standing alone in the street in Canton, a distance of twenty-five miles before me, and six and a fourth cents in my pocket as my only dependence, save the good providence of God, I still hoped that some way would be provided for my safe return. While meditating what to do, a stranger drove up behind me and asked me where I was going. "To or near Shanesville," was my reply. "Well," said he, "I am going there with an empty carriage and two fleet horses, and if you will give me six cents to buy grease for my wheels I will take you there to-night." The money was handed out—it was all I had, it was all he wanted—and before night I was landed safe at home. I thanked the Lord, for I believed his good providence had directed the stranger to me.

By the consent of my father I commenced praying in the family when I was at home; but much of my time for the first two years after my conversion was spent with my friend and benefactor, brother M'Dowell. During the summers I went to school, and during the winters I taught school. I had waked

up to a new world of thought, as well as of feeling. English grammar, natural philosophy, chemistry, physiology, anatomy, and medicine, each, came in turn, and I employed my leisure time in studying these and other branches of science with great diligence. Much as I was delighted with the progress I made in my studies, my greatest care was to get some of my relations to go with me in the way to life eternal. With kind words I induced one of my sisters to go with me to a quarterly meeting. When we arrived at the meeting-house I told a good lady to invite her to take a seat near to the pulpit. I really believed that there was something peculiarly solemn in the place, and that she would be more likely to receive good impressions among the pious than in the wicked crowd in the back part of the house. My wish was gratified. My sister was seated near the pulpit, surrounded by pious praying friends. Rev. William Swayze, of precious memory, was our presiding elder. When he commenced to preach, I commenced to pray for my sister. I looked at the preacher and then at her, and toward the close of the sermon I saw the large tears gathering in her eyes, and soon coursing down her cheeks. My faith increased as I prayed. "O Lord, give me one of my father's household to go with me. Shall I be the only one of the family that shall be delivered from the delusion in which we have lived?" was the earnest language of my heart. At the close of the sermon the preacher said, "All you who wish an interest in the prayers of the Church rise up." My sister was soon on her feet. That night she came to the altar for prayers, and before the meeting closed she was happily converted to God.

We then joined together to pray for the rest of the family, but for some time our prospects were dark and dreary.

There was a camp meeting some seven miles off, and our plan was to get our brother next younger than myself to go with us; he promised to go, but on the day when we started he refused. We however went, praying for him; and after we had been on the ground a few days he came. We talked to him, but he would not hear us, and remained on the outskirts among the careless crowd till Saturday night, when, walking from the spring to the encampment, he suddenly fell to the ground, and commenced crying at the top of his voice, "Send for my brother and sister!" We were soon on the spot, and he cried out when he saw us, "Will you forgive me for treating you so badly?" "Yes," said I, "it is all forgiven." "Well, will God forgive me?" continued he. My sister and I both assured him that God would forgive him. We led him to the altar of prayer, and, after a hard struggle and continued prayer, about midnight he was powerfully converted. There were now three of us, and we all joined in prayer for the family. Our father with his silver locks bowed at the altar of prayer and said to us, "Children, come and pray for me too." In a few years all were happily converted and members of the Church. That brother and that sister have long since gone to their rest in heaven, and both in their dying hours gave clear evidence of the power of divine grace to save. They died triumphantly happy.

I have mentioned these things to encourage those who now have unconverted relatives to pray for them. But I must pause and ask, where is that simple, con-

fiding faith with which we went to a throne of grace in those days, and looking up to God through Jesus Christ, believing that we should have the things we asked for? If we have substituted speculative theories on the subject of faith for this strong confidence in the divine promises we have made a sad exchange. May the God of our fathers bring us back to these old landmarks! I may add here, that after the conversion of our family gradual inroads were made upon our community. Others followed our example and left them, and sought a home in the Methodist or some other evangelical Church. My father was unfortunate in business, and was obliged to sell his property to satisfy his creditors, and retired to a rented farm.

In the year 1830 I finally left my father's house, with nothing excepting my clothing—a small bundle of which I carried in my hands. My friend, brother M'Dowell, had in the mean time removed sixty miles further west, and settled in Knox county, Ohio, where he labored with great success as a local preacher. It was my aim to live in his neighborhood, learn some trade, and devote as much of my time to study as I could.

Soon after my arrival in Knox county the brethren brought my case before the society for license to preach. When the matter was mentioned to the preacher in charge, Rev. James M'Mahan, he met me in front of the church, looked at me with his keen, penetrating eye; and, I have no doubt, if he had expressed his honest sentiments he would have said, "An unpromising youth." He told me I had better put off my application to some future time; to

which I replied that I had not made it; and, as my friends had made it without my consent, I would not take the responsibility to withdraw it. He went into the church and made a set speech against me, and took the vote; but my case was passed by a large majority. He made another speech, and took the vote the second time, and the matter carried by the same majority—of this I was informed afterward. I certainly never blamed my esteemed friend M'Mahan. He had before him a poorly-clad, unpromising-looking subject, and he did what he believed to be right. In two weeks from this time I had to appear before the quarterly conference. Brother M'Mahan soon introduced me to Rev. L. Swormstedt, who was then our presiding elder, with this remark, "He wants to get license to preach, and perhaps he may want to get into the traveling connection some day." I was aware of a strong current of prejudice against me. A stranger among the brethren at that place, nothing was known of my previous history; and, while many doubts and fears were expressed, brother Swormstedt, with his peculiar frankness and a disposition to give every one a fair trial, said, "We will put him up to preach." When I was told that I had to preach what would be considered a trial sermon, I immediately retired to the grove and laid the matter before the Lord in prayer. I felt confident that if it was the Lord's will that I should preach he would aid me by his grace. When I went to the church brother Swormstedt took his seat in the pulpit and brother M'Mahan in front of the altar. The Lord helped me, and brother M'Mahan wept, while brother Swormstedt gave a few hearty amens—

just such as he could give in those days. Many through the congregation wept. A number approached the altar for the prayers of the Church, and we had a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. From that day to this brother M'Mahan has been one of my best friends. I had indeed perhaps too little care about my personal appearance. What I had earned the two previous winters by teaching school I gave to my father, because he needed it, and reserved nothing for myself, but very ordinary clothing.

In three months after I was licensed to preach I was recommended to the annual conference, to be received into the traveling connection. I told the brethren that I could not go; I had neither horse, saddle, nor clothing to start out with; but still I was willing to follow the openings of Providence, and go if the way was opened before me. I was fully satisfied that, if it was the Lord's will that I should go, a way would be opened for me, and that embarrassments in my way would be removed.

Brother M'Dowell told me to purchase a horse, and he would indorse for me. Brother R. sold me an old saddle for four dollars, on twelve months' credit; brother H. a pair of saddle-bags, on the same terms. A neighbor woman took her husband's old plaid cloak, ripped it up, and turned it inside out, and fixed it up for me; another good sister gave me a few pairs of socks. I had an old white hat, which, from long use and exposure to rains, was nearly worn out. Brother T. D. made me a pair of shoes, while I cut off the skirts of an old frock coat to make me a pair of wrappers or leggins. Friends were multiplied

around me, and I was supplied with every real comfort.

By some good fortune I had fifty cents in money in my pocket, and thus duly equipped I started for conference at Mansfield, a distance of twenty-five miles from my residence. Fortunately for me, in those days, they did not allow candidates admission into the conference, as they transacted their business with closed doors; for had I been admitted among the brethren, I would have run a narrow chance of being rejected on the ground of my poor outfit.

At the close of the conference my name was read out for Nicholas circuit, Virginia, a distance of nearly four hundred miles. The fifty cents I had I paid to a man for pasturing my horse during conference. And now came another trial. How to reach my field of labor, four hundred miles off, without money to defray my expenses, I did not know. My colleague, also a young man, lived twenty miles from my place of residence. I called on him, and found he had barely money enough to take us both to our appointment. Off we started, and, after a tedious journey on horseback, we reached our field of labor, and the day we arrived the last cent of money was spent. At the first quarterly meeting we each received two dollars quarterage. We had a prosperous year, with thirty-one appointments to fill every four weeks, and a distance of three hundred and fifty miles to travel. The appointments were from fourteen to twenty-five miles apart. My health, which had been poor for a few years past, was very much improved on bear meat, venison, corn bread, and an occasional mess of pork and beans. Never was there a better hospital

for an invalid young preacher than one of those mountain circuits; and there are many of our young men now, with broken-down constitutions, just from our literary institutions, who would be gainers through life if they could spend a year or two in those mountainous regions, breathe a pure mountain air, and live on the homely fare of the mountaineer.

At the close of this year the brethren came up nobly, and paid each of us fifty-one dollars as our salary for the year. With close economy I saved thirty dollars to pay on my horse, and some other small debts.

I remained four years in this rough Kanawha district, and by this time had well-nigh forgotten my German language. My debts were all paid, and I was free to go wherever the providence of God would open the way.

## CHAPTER II.

### STUDY OF THE GERMAN LANGUAGE—MISSION WORK.

WHILE on Guyandotte circuit, in Virginia, I saw a call, published in the Western Christian Advocate, from Bishop Emory, for a missionary, who could speak the German and French languages, to go to the south. I immediately remarked to a brother that I would again study the German language, and preach to the Germans, who were then emigrating, by many thousands annually, into this country. With this resolution to study the German language, I commenced, but knew of no one who could aid me or instruct me in the pure European German. About this time I visited my father in northern Ohio; procured a German New Testament, and some other German books, with a view of carrying out my purpose.

During this trip, while passing through Zanesville, Ohio, I heard of a young German man, by the name of William Nast, who was represented to be a fine scholar, and under a deep awakening anxiously seeking for salvation. It occurred to me at once that if I could find this man he might give me lessons in German, and I might be of advantage to him by imparting spiritual instruction and encouragement. I inquired for him at Zanesville, and found he had started down the Muskingum river on a flat-boat. I followed

him down to the Ohio river, and learned that he landed at Gallipolis, and, upon inquiry, found that he had gone five miles into the country with a brother Cubbage. On arriving at Cubbage's I learned that he was at a brother Newton's. Here I found him, in a small room, giving instruction to a few young children. I introduced myself as a Methodist preacher, and told him that I had come to take him with me to my circuit in Western Virginia, to which he replied, "I can not go with you; I can no more be a member of civil society. I have sinned away my day of grace, and to go with you would only increase my condemnation." I, however, urged him to go with me, telling him there was yet hope for him. He continued to beg off in the most piteous strains. I finally told him I wanted to learn German, and wished him to give me instruction.

This plea seemed to induce his consent to go; after several fruitless efforts I succeeded in borrowing a horse for him in the neighborhood. After the horse was procured and shod, he was strongly inclined to stay, with a plea that he had never been accustomed to riding on horseback; and, further, he pleaded that it would only increase his condemnation to go among Christian people. I urged him to go and hope for mercy from the Lord.

On a cold day, in the month of February, 1834, we started; and on the evening of the first day's journey we stopped at brother Campbell's, a local preacher, who received us with much cordiality and kindness, and immediately gave out an appointment for preaching at his house the same evening. Brother Nast had told me during the day that he thought he had been

called to preach, and for having resisted the call, and thus grieving the Holy Spirit, he had brought this great condemnation upon himself. As he then understood the English language well, although he could not speak it fluently, I proposed to him that he should exhort after my sermon, which he consented to do. At the close of the sermon I prepared the way for him, by informing the congregation who he was, and where I had found him; and, continued, wishing them to pray that the Lord might deliver him from all his troubles.

He arose and commenced in the following strain: "I have lost my soul—I have sinned away my day of grace; there is no mercy for me, and I only arise to warn you not to put off your return to God. Take warning from me and do not quench the Holy Spirit." In this strain he went on for some time. The people listened with great attention, and I have no doubt, while he was telling his sad tale, many an ardent though silent prayer was offered to God that he might yet deliver the young man from all his fears, and make him an instrument of great good to his countrymen. It was a general sentiment at that time, and often expressed, that the Lord would convert the young German and some day make a great and useful missionary of him.

After the congregation was dismissed we retired to the room assigned us for the night. I was soon soundly asleep, but about midnight was awakened by a noise on the floor; brother Nast had risen from his bed, and lay on the floor in the cold winter night, struggling, groaning, and praying for mercy. He must have spent several hours on the floor during the

night; and, in the morning, I said to him: "Did you not tell us last night that you had no hope of heaven—that you had lost all hope of ever obtaining mercy?" "Yes," said he, "I did, and I say so still." "No," replied I, "you have not given up all hope. You still believe, if you were to express the honest sentiments of your heart, that there is mercy for you; and, to prove this to you, I will appeal to your own conduct. If you had no hope for mercy why did you get up last night, cold as it was, and lie for hours on the floor, if you did not have some hope that the Lord would yet hear and answer your prayer?" To this he answered: "Well, a man must be very far gone if he get so far that he will not pray any more." After breakfast we started on our journey, and in a few days arrived at Guyandotte, in Virginia.

Here I introduced him to the "first families" of pious Methodists, all of whom took a deep interest in his welfare, and many an ardent prayer was offered for his conversion. During his stay with me he translated our Articles of Religion and the General Rules of our Discipline, and wrote in English characters so that I could read it. When he came to the translation of the sacramental services he hesitated very much, saying that he was too great a sinner and too unworthy to translate and write those solemn words. At my earnest request, however, he proceeded and finished the translation.

After spending some time with me I left him in the care of a pious family, by the name of Maupin, while I went to a quarterly meeting. During my absence he returned to Ohio, and afterward gave me the following account of his trip home: "I started on my

way back to Ohio, and soon came to a stream where the water was very high, after a shower of rain. It was at flood hight, and looked fearful. I thought this would be a good opportunity to make an end of my troubles, and that I would ride into the stream, in hope that I might accidentally be drowned. But a second thought occurred to me; the horse might be drowned too; and as you had become responsible for his safe return, and that you might not have him to pay for, I did not venture in, but waited till the waters had fallen; then went over, returned to Ohio, and delivered the horse at the place where we got him."

I now fully resolved to devote myself to the study of the pure European German language, and wrote a letter to Rev. T. A. Morris, then editor of the Western Christian Advocate, on this subject. The letter was published in the Advocate, accompanied with nearly a column of editorial remarks, highly recommending the course which I proposed to pursue, and stating the great importance of doing something to meet the wants of our large and rapidly-increasing German population.

These remarks from the editor tended very much to strengthen me in my purpose to persevere in my efforts to make myself acquainted with the German language. I commenced to read and privately to pray and think in German, but I had more of a task before me than I at first was aware of; for at that time I had no idea of its numerous declensions and inflections, and of its copious fullness and beauty.

The next year I was appointed to Point Pleasant circuit, in Western Virginia. Here I found a large German settlement who were destitute of a preacher,

and when they found I could speak some German, they made a strong request for me to preach to them in their own language. I excused myself on the ground that I was not sufficiently familiar with their language; that my mother tongue was only the so-called Pennsylvania German, very different from the pure written German, and that I would of course make many blunders in trying to preach to them. To this they replied, "We will excuse all mistakes; only speak to us as well as you can, and we will be satisfied." I thereupon agreed to do so, and on the appointed day there was a large congregation of Germans out. They were hungry for the word of life, and I looked at them with pity. I arose in the congregation, and tried to speak. My sentences were disconnected and badly constructed; yet many of my hearers were deeply affected, and wept profusely when they heard the name of Jesus and Savior in their own language, in a public assembly. My own heart was deeply affected. After speaking to them for a short time, I read to them the General Rules of our Society, translated by brother Nast. Seeing their earnestness and great desire for religious instruction, I could not but think of the many Germans scattered all over our country like sheep without a shepherd. I believed that the Lord would yet convert brother Nast, and send him forth among the thousands of Germans to collect them to the fold of Christ.

During this year, 1835, brother Nast was converted—delivered from the bondage of sin, and brought into the liberty of God's children. When I heard of this event, I resolved to make him a visit at the first opportunity; consequently, at the

close of the conference year, I returned to Ohio, and found him at Kenyon College, in Knox county, Ohio. As soon as he saw me, he ran to me with extended arms, threw them around my neck, and exclaimed, "O, brother Miller, I feel very different from what I did when I saw you in Virginia. Bless the Lord! he has delivered me from all my fears." How changed his countenance, his language, his manner! The whole man was changed. He was no longer the desponding and self-despairing mourner, looking in every direction for help, and finding none, but the joyful follower of the Savior, full of the power of his grace, with the Gospel word like a fire shut up in his bones, and anxious to proclaim this salvation to his countrymen.

After an evening's conversation at brother Nast's room, in the college building, I told him I would go to the hotel for my lodging. "No," said brother Nast, "you are my guest; you sleep on my cot and I will sleep on the floor;" and nothing but my complying with this request would satisfy him. "As to supper," said he, "I have plenty of brown bread and molasses." We talked till about midnight, and then lay down to sleep, with more joyful hearts than many others had on beds of down.

Brother Nast told me he must and would preach, and if the Church would not receive him and give him work, he would teach in some college and devote the proceeds of his labors toward supporting a preacher.

Soon after his conversion he was licensed to preach, and commenced his missionary labors among the Germans. At the conference in 1835 he received his

first appointment as missionary to the Germans in Cincinnati. An account of his labors will be given in connection with his own experience.

In this year I was removed from Western Virginia to the Indiana line, and appointed to Greenville circuit. It may not be inappropriate to give a sketch of some of the difficulties many of us had to pass through in those days, for the encouragement of those who now imagine that they have many difficulties and hardships to contend with. Greenville was at that time one of the poorest circuits in the Ohio conference. It was a low, wet country, much subject to chills and fevers; and a majority of the people in Greenville had the chills during the fall, and the people through the country did not fare much better. Soon after the conference of 1835 I was married, and when I went to my circuit the people were kind enough to let me know that they were poor, and could not pay me much. I gave them to understand that I was not alarmed at this; for during the previous year, which was my last year in Virginia, I had received only forty-five dollars as my entire salary, and when I left the state I sold my horse and settled up my affairs.

After waiting a day for a steamboat, and finding none, I built me a small raft by nailing a few slabs and planks together, and started down the Kanawha river for the Ohio. I got a man to take my raft to the middle of the stream, and when I was balanced on a block of wood in the center of my craft, I found the top of it even with the water, and had to keep myself nicely poised to keep from being swamped. Thus I floated with the current a distance of some

forty miles. The river was very high, and the current rapid, and some time in the night I arrived at the mouth of the river, and was taken to shore by Captain Slye, who was out in the night on business, and heard my loud calls for help. He came after me with a skiff, and overtook me just as I was entering the Ohio river. I have often since thought that this was a hazardous and foolhardy adventure, but I have this plea to offer for my folly: I was far from home, was anxious to reach it, and wanted to save every dime I had for future emergency.

At the mouth of the Kanawha I took steamboat for Portsmouth, and from thence went by canal to where my old friend and benefactor, brother M'Dowell, resided, in Muskingum county. I have no doubt that many of our preachers endured similar hardships and privations in their early itinerancy in the west, and we only refer to them to assure our German brethren, many of whom are now enduring privations and sufferings for the Gospel's sake, that others before them endured the same, and continued in the work under the most pressing wants, without even thinking of abandoning the work on account of small allowance and consequent embarrassment.

I commenced my labors on Greenville circuit, very much disappointed that I had not been stationed near brother Nast's field of labor, to enable me to continue my studies of the German language under his instructions; but such was the indifference with which this matter was viewed at that time by many of the leading men of our conference, that it was not considered important to have any more German preachers. Even brother Nast, who had been thrown upon the hands

of the conference by the good providence and mercy of God, was looked upon with indifference by many; though some thought they saw, in his accession to the Church, the prospect of a great future work among the Germans. I continued the study of the German language, however, in the midst of my hard labors on the circuit. The people were poor and could not pay much. I bought my firewood in the country, chopped it, and hauled it home on a small wagon. I gave lessons in German to some young men in Greenville, who wished to commence the study of the language on evenings when I was at home, for which they kindly paid me twenty dollars.

But our prospects for a living became more gloomy every day. I was in debt; and wheat was high, flour scarce, and I had no money to purchase. We used corn bread till finally the corn gave out. I then went to a brother in the country and made known my wants, and told him I must have some corn, to which he replied that he had but little to spare, and what he had he intended to take to town to purchase goods for a cloak. I had a cloak half worn out, which I immediately offered him for corn. He accepted the offer. I took the corn and gave the cloak. We lived well on corn bread and a small quantity of meat, and I traveled some of the coldest weather during the winter without a cloak. Toward spring the friends in Piqua heard of my condition, and generously bought me materials for an overcoat. By this time my other clothes were well-nigh worn out, and I had no money to buy, being already as deeply in debt as I dared venture. I had the offer of a good school if I would quit my work and go to

teaching; but I was an itinerant in the Methodist Church and not for sale to any higher bidder. As the last resort my excellent wife, who would not have me stop preaching for any consideration, put patches on my worn-out garments, and I went on preaching, glad that I had things as comfortable as they were.

During the following summer I attended a camp meeting near Troy, Ohio. My patched garments soon excited the sympathy of my good friend, Rev. G. W. Walker. He called me to take a walk with him into the grove, and asked me why I had come to camp meeting with such poor clothing; to which I replied that it was the best I had, and being already in debt, I did not feel justified in going deeper in debt, and could get no money on the circuit to purchase clothing. He gave me five dollars, with which I bought stuff for pantaloons and vest, and my wife traded off a fine watch, which she had when we were married, for a good piece of broadcloth, out of which I had a coat made, so that in the fall I went to conference as neatly clad as most of the preachers—and very few were aware of the difficulties I had passed through. I may state here that we received about ninety dollars for quarterage, house-rent, table expenses, moving, etc. I mention these things in this place to let our young German missionaries know what hardships we formerly had to undergo.

In an early day on the frontier work we had to endure many privations and hardships for the Gospel's sake, and never thought of giving up the ministry on account of these embarrassments. Others of our ministers of earlier days could tell of similar or severer trials, but found their reward in the success

of their ministry. I kept up a correspondence with brother Nast, and waited with great anxiety to hear from time to time the result of his labors in Cincinnati. At the close of the year he reported a small society collected under his labors; but such was the unpromising state of the mission in Cincinnati that it was discontinued at the end of the year, and brother Nast was appointed to a circuit including a large portion of central and northern Ohio. He made his round every six weeks. The Lord blessed his labors in many places, and a number were converted. In this way there was here and there a nucleus formed, around which large societies have since been raised up.

Many amusing as well as interesting scenes occurred during brother Nast's first year's itinerancy. Unaccustomed to horseback exercise, and having a rather stubborn animal to deal with, he was frequently thrown from his horse into the mud. His horse would run from him; and he, with his saddlebags on his arm, would have to travel on foot sometimes for many miles before he could overtake him. He once told me his horse had treated him so badly that he became almost discouraged, and it occurred to him, as he was in the Lord's service he would lay the matter before the Lord; so he hitched his horse and kneeled down under a tree and prayed earnestly to the Lord to control the bad disposition of his horse. Those who were well acquainted with brother Nast at that time will attribute the greatest sincerity to him in this matter, for he made it a matter of conscience "in every thing by prayer and supplication to make known his requests unto God."

Dr. Nast will pardon me for relating another occurrence in his itinerancy, which he frequently related to the amusement of his friends. He had been told by some old hero of the saddle-bags he must take good care of his own horse, curry and feed him well, etc. Willing to follow instructions in every thing, he went out one morning to feed and curry his horse, and when he had gone through the operation systematically, as he thought, a stranger walked into the stable and remarked to him, "Mr. Nast, why did you go to the trouble of currying and feeding my horse? I could have done it myself." And not till then was he aware that he had curried the wrong horse. So deeply absorbed in the great work that was before him, and so earnest was he in its accomplishment, he had not taken time nor care to form an acquaintance with his own horse.

During the year that brother Nast traveled on his extensive circuit I labored on West Union circuit, and again devoted much of my time to prosecuting the study of the German language. In the following year brother Nast was returned to Cincinnati as a missionary, and I was appointed to Milford circuit, near Cincinnati, to enable me, as my presiding elder told me, to meet with brother Nast and get instructions from him. This was in the year 1838. During this year the Lord blessed the labors of brother Nast, and a number of souls were converted. On the 16th of March, in the same year, I left Batavia for Cincinnati, to assist brother Nast at a two days' meeting. It rained and snowed on me all the way; but I reached Cincinnati at dusk wet and cold. I found that there was a German prayer meeting ap-

pointed at the old Asbury Chapel, a small frame house on Main-street, at the upper end of the city. I went to the prayer meeting. There were but a few out, on account of the inclemency of the weather, but those that were out were intelligent German immigrants; and, although I had tried to exercise in the German language a few times in the country, my courage failed when I was called on to pray in German, and so I prayed in English. After meeting I went home with brother Nast, in company with brother Swahlen, who was then an exhorter, and one of the first-fruits of brother Nast's labors in Cincinnati. We talked till after midnight on the future prospects of the German work.

On Sabbath, March 18, 1838, at eleven o'clock, I tried to preach to the Germans, very much at a loss for words to express myself; many appeared deeply affected, and I soon found that they were disposed to make great allowance for my inaccuracies. Brother Nast followed with an exhortation and some remarks in reference to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, after which I administered the sacrament to the little flock. At three o'clock, P M., we had a love-feast. This was the first meeting of the kind ever held among them, and our German brethren appeared deeply affected, and were much encouraged to pray, and live, and look for a great revival among their countrymen.

In the evening I tried to preach again, with some more liberty; and such was the anxiety of our German brethren for me to succeed in my efforts that they urged me to keep on trying, and assured me that I would succeed if I would but persevere. Our friend, Rev. L. L. Hamline, afterward Bishop, but then one

of the editors of the Western Christian Advocate, early espoused the German cause, and made many a strong plea for us when it was a question of life or death. He was present at this meeting in the evening, and, at the close of my effort to preach, he related his experience, in English, and brother Nast interpreted it in German. The Germans listened with great attention, and what he said undoubtedly made a deep impression on the minds of all.

This, I presume, was the first German sacramental meeting ever held among the foreign Germans in the Methodist Episcopal Church. One thing especially arrested my attention during the progress of this meeting. In their prayers, and in the relation of their experience in love-feast, they frequently expressed their gratitude to God that, in his good providence, the Methodist Church had sent them a preacher to teach them the way of life; and, undoubtedly, since that day thousands of ardent prayers and devout thanks have ascended to a throne of grace, from the renewed hearts of the Germans, at a recollection of the interest which the Methodist Church has taken in their behalf.

In the following year, 1839, I was appointed to the circuit around Cincinnati, and had frequent opportunities to visit the mission, and join in the exercises of worship with brother Nast, and brother Schmucker, who followed brother Nast, in 1839, when the former was called to the editorship of the Christian Apologist, the first number of which was issued on the first of January in this year.

At the commencement of this conference year, the question came up at the conference in reference to

publishing a German paper, and the appointment of another German missionary. Some were in favor of abandoning the work; some looked on with indifference, and professed to see no prospect of doing much among these infidel and Roman Catholic Germans; while others argued that we had not the means to expend in this way. The editors of the Western Christian Advocate, brothers Elliott and Hamline, had taken a decided stand in favor of the German cause, and had published many a strong plea for it in their paper; and just at a point in the conference, when brother Hamline thought the interests of this infant cause was in jeopardy, he arose in his place and addressed the president and the conference in one of the most eloquent pleas we have ever listened to on a conference floor. Those who looked with great interest on the movements of the Church in reference to the German work, were much rejoiced to find so able an advocate for our cause, and we all felt, after the address of brother Hamline, and witnessing the impression it made on the minds of the conference, that the crisis was past. In this we were not disappointed. The Church came to the work nobly; those who had looked on with indifference espoused the cause heartily. And now, looking back twenty years and witnessing the results that have followed, we can more fully appreciate the importance of this advocacy of our cause at that time. The German paper was commenced, and has made its weekly visits to thousands of German families from that day to this. Eternity alone can tell how many a wanderer has been brought to the fold of Christ, by reading the evangelical truths it has borne upon its pages to its thousands of readers.

In the year 1839 I was appointed to labor among the Germans in the bounds of the Cincinnati and Lebanon districts; and, in the year 1840, a German district, to which I was appointed, was formed in the bounds of what is now included in the Cincinnati conference. During this year I visited not only the few appointments in the district where preachers were regularly stationed, but also other points where I found German settlements, both in towns and country-places. A similar district was formed in the bounds of the Pittsburg conference, in the year 1840, and brother N. Callender was appointed to labor on it. By his judicious management, and untiring zeal for the German cause, he contributed much toward extending the work in the bounds of his district.

It will, however, not be in accordance with the design of this work to enter into a detailed account of the different fields of labor occupied by the German missionaries; my aim is to exhibit the evangelical character of these missionary operations, by giving an account of the awakening, conversion, and call to the ministry of the men who have been instrumental in carrying it forward.

## CHAPTER III.

### WILLIAM NAST, D. D.—HIS TRAINING AND LABORS.

On account of long personal and very intimate acquaintance with Dr. Nast, since he has neither leisure nor disposition at this time to write an extended narrative of his past life himself, I must give the reader only an outline sketch of his history.

William Nast was born in Stuttgart, the capital of Wirtemberg, Germany. His father was counselor of finances, and connected with the affairs of the government. He was a man who feared God; and, according to the light which he had, he walked in the right way, and in his latter years experienced justification, by faith in Christ. His mother, also in advanced life, experienced the same blessing; and both, it is hoped, have gone to their reward in heaven. His three sisters, older than himself, were early taught the pure doctrines of the Gospel. They belonged to the more pious class of the Lutheran Church, and under the instructions they received in early youth they all embraced religion and led pious lives.

From a small boy, under the training of his oldest sister, as brother Nast has often told me, he felt drawings of the Savior, and often prayed, and tried to be pious. His sisters were all married to clergymen of the Lutheran Church, and consequently he had early

and numerous privileges with regard to religious instruction, especially under the pious care of his oldest sister. In his eighth year he was sent from home to a boarding-school, from which he was taken in his thirteenth year, and sent to school to his brother-in-law, a Lutheran minister, distinguished for his piety as well as for his learning. His teacher gave him a pure evangelical education, and prepared him for confirmation according to the usages of the National Church in Germany.

During these instructions he was truly convinced of sin, and deeply penitent. He said he felt the load of his sins pressing upon him; and, as soon as the ceremony of confirmation was over, he hastened through the rain into the field, kneeled down and prayed the Lord to give him a new heart, that he might be able to keep his vows. He has told me frequently that the Lord blessed him, and he felt happy, and that he then and there resolved to devote himself to the missionary work. Little did he or his friends then think that he would finally be so extensively engaged in a great missionary movement, among his own countrymen in the New World. He has frequently remarked that if, at the time of his confirmation, he had had the privilege of Methodist class meetings and love-feast meetings, he would have grown in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, and thus might have escaped the thousands of sorrows and mental gloom through which he had to pass in after life.

His father died about the time of his confirmation, and this was the means of strengthening his pious resolutions; and he frequently attended the meetings of the Pietists, who hold private religious meetings,

though members of the Established Church. He wanted to go to the Mission-Institute at Basle, but his relations had destined him for the ministry in the Established Church.

Those who are designed for the ministry get their education free; and fifty young men are annually taken to one of the four preparatory theological seminaries. Here he was placed in a situation that was injurious to his religious life. Two of the professors were decided rationalists, and there were scarcely any of the young men in the school who were religiously inclined. The classics were constantly read, and the heroes of Greece and Rome, with their poets and philosophers, were exhibited as the models of every thing that was good and great. The prophecies concerning Christ were all explained away, and the miracles accounted for on natural principles. In fact, they had no religious education, and it was a solemn mockery to make any pretension to religion and follow the teachings of these men.

In brother Nast's class were some of the most wicked as well as the most talented young men of his country; about twelve of whom have since distinguished themselves by their writings on theology and politics. Among these is Dr. Strauss, well known by the publication of his "Life of Jesus." This work aims at sapping the very foundation of religious truth.

Brother Nast at first refused to study his lessons on the Sabbath day, and felt a great need of a deeper work of grace. His sister wrote to him, and instructed him according to the light they had, at the same time warning him against spiritual pride. This only brought confusion to his mind, and he did not

know how far he could go in making a profession of religion, and not lay himself liable to the charge of being spiritually proud. Thus surrounded by temptations without, and fears within, opposed by his fellow-students for his seriousness, and without a friend to take him by the hand, and explain to him the way of the Lord more perfectly, he finally yielded to temptation, threw off restraints, and became an intimate friend of Strauss, who, in after years, distinguished himself by his infidel writings. Thus, by associating with the ungodly, he was led away further into the mazes of error, till he became a skeptic.

At the close of four years of study in this department he went up with his class to the University, where the first two years were devoted to the study of mental philosophy and its kindred branches. In conversation with Dr. Nast, in reference to his feelings as a skeptic, he made the following remarks: "I always respected religion, and frequently in my reflecting moments felt a deep concern with regard to the awful realities of the future. The Bible, I knew, taught the necessity of a holy life, and I thought, after all, the Bible might be true; and if true, all that it contains about Christ—sin—holiness—and a future state of righteous retribution, must follow. Under these reflections I often felt the necessity of being prepared by grace for a future state, but I had now become too wicked to give my heart to God." In reference to his preparation for, and entrance upon, the ministry of the Established Church in his fatherland, I insert a communication he made to me a few years ago on this subject. "During the two years in the University," says he, "I got lost in the labyrinth

of Pantheism, the most modern form of German rationalism. After I had passed my philosophical examination, which is equivalent to graduating in an American college, I came to the determination not to enter the three years' course of theology, which succeeds the philosophical course, and voluntarily withdrew from the theological institution. My remaining in the Church would have secured me wealth, honor, and ease; but my conscience did not permit me to profess and teach a doctrine which I did not believe from the heart, or which, at least, I interpreted in a different sense from the Church. I was not willing, for the sake of a living, or to please friends, to make a solemn promise of preaching, according to the Articles of Religion in the Lutheran Church, which rationalism had taught me to reject, and which I saw were rejected by most of the doctors of divinity and their scholars. I was conscious, too, that according to the teachings of the holy Scripture I was not a Christian; and nothing appeared more absurd to me than that a man who is himself unreconciled to God, and resists his Holy Spirit, should dare to preach the word of reconciliation. I preferred to sacrifice all my property to pay back the cost of my education which I had received from the state, rather than proceed and enter into the ministry so utterly unfit for such a solemn calling."

By thus refusing to enter the ministry he was thrown upon his own resources, and compelled to seek his living by his literary labors. He went to see a great poet in the north of Germany, and for some time, during his residence in that part of the country, he wrote reviews of light literature and theatrical

performances; but he soon met with disappointments and returned home.

In the year 1828, hearing some fine accounts from America, and especially openings for classical teachers, he set out for the new country to seek his home and support among strangers in a strange land. He has frequently told me that, on leaving his pious relations in Germany, he again thought he would become a better man and a Christian. He brought a letter of introduction to a distinguished clergyman of the Lutheran Church in America; but the cool treatment he received made him bitter against the Church. He then went to a German doctor, the father of one of his University friends, and there privately began to study the English language, at Millersburg, on the Susquehanna river. Here he fell in with an American gentleman, who took him into his house as a tutor of his children, and during his stay at this place he formed an acquaintance with a Unitarian preacher, who manifested great kindness toward him. Just as he was on the point of becoming a Unitarian and a Universalist, his friend had to move to the east.

Mr. Nast was recommended as a tutor to a Methodist family, and here he became acquainted with several Methodist preachers of the Baltimore conference. From the kind treatment which he received here, and from his mingling with these pious people, he soon became convinced of the folly of skepticism, and resolved again to try to be a Christian. After remaining one year in this Methodist family he was called to West Point, the seat of the military academy. Here the providence of God singularly opened the way to deliver him from his skepticism. He fell in

with two young officers who had been converted under the preaching of Bishop M'Ilvaine; he read with them the Hebrew, and translated "Tholuck's Conversation with the Skeptic."

By this time he had evidently regained a longing desire for spiritual food, and on the Sabbath day, not satisfied with the dry sermons which were read to the military students, he was accustomed to go down to a little chapel on the commons to hear brother Romer, a preacher of the New York conference. He was generally much affected under brother Romer's preaching, and had earnest longings to be a Christian. At the annual examination at West Point, he heard, on one occasion, Dr. Fisk preach, and this sermon made a deep impression upon his mind.

On inquiring into the cause of brother Nast's great distress of mind while under awakening, and why during much of this time he inflicted such severe penance upon himself, I learned the following facts: During his stay at West Point he read Bishop Jeremy Taylor's "Rules of Holy Living," and set to work in good earnest to make himself holy. This was the rock on which he came near making fearful shipwreck. He depended too much upon his own exertions, instead of being willing to be saved by grace. He lived abstemiously, studied hard, and imposed many a grievous burden upon himself, because, as he told me, "his reason could not comprehend how it would be consistent with divine justice that the sinner should be absolved from the guilt and penalty of his sins *without suffering in part himself for his sins.*" He formed an acquaintance with Bishop

M'Ilvaine, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, President elect of Kenyon College, and through his influence he afterward went to Kenyon College as teacher. Various offers were made to him from different places, but before engaging himself permanently any where he went to see the Methodist family in which he had been tutor. Here he met Rev. D. Steele, of the Baltimore conference, who, with some others, was going to camp meeting in the Tuscarawa Valley, on the banks of the Juniata river. Brother Nast accompanied them in a boat chartered by the Methodists; and while they sung their hymns and appeared happy, he became more sensible of his spiritual poverty. With fair prospects for this life he felt that he had none for the future. The thoughts of his past life and the many opportunities for doing good that had been neglected weighed heavily upon his mind. He looked at these Methodists as the happiest people he had ever mingled with, and instead of despising and ridiculing them he wished himself as happy as they were. His heart was broken up and his eyes became a fountain of tears at the recollection of his past life.

At this camp meeting he went to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and was much melted down and humbled in view of his past sins. He believed that the Lord blessed him, and had he then gone on believing in Christ and trusting in his merits he would undoubtedly have grown in grace and advanced in the way to everlasting life. But the adversary of his soul was not willing to give him up, and soon clouds of darkness were gathered around him; and I have seldom if ever known a case of such deep men-

tal sufferings. He went from place to place inquiring and looking for relief from his sorrows, inflicting upon himself the severest sufferings—fasting, praying, exposing himself to inclement weather, and enduring various kinds of hardship. He still remained in the delusion before mentioned, that the sinner must suffer in himself a certain amount of punishment for his sins. And, considering himself a great sinner, he thought no punishment would be too severe for him to endure. On one occasion he actually held his finger in a burning candle till it burned into a crisp, in order to wake himself up to a sense of his lost condition. Sometimes he was strongly tempted to believe that his day of grace was past—that there was no hope nor mercy for him. He labored under the most dreadful apprehensions with regard to the future, and often wandered alone in his agony through the woods. While his distress was great on account of his own case, he in imagination saw before him the opening pit, and crowds of poor souls going down to perdition.

In this condition brother Barnitz, of New Oxford, near Gettysburg, a true son of consolation, with his devoted wife, heard of him, and took him to their house, talked kindly to him, reading with him "Fletcher's Appeal" and "Address to Seekers of Salvation." Gleamings of hope and clouds of despair would alternately pass before him. Sometimes a ray of hope would spring up, and then all was dark again. After spending several months in this kind family he left, fearing that he might become burdensome to the family, and that to stay would be imposing upon their generosity. He wanted to be away from soci-

ety, and yet he was anxious to find some one who might comfort and encourage him.

He finally came to Pittsburg, and hearing of a camp meeting in the vicinity, conducted by Rev. Charles Elliott, who was then presiding elder on the district, he went to this camp meeting, and under the preaching of a sermon from these words, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the water," he felt hope again springing up. The Spirit of God carried the truth to his heart, and after he had prayed in the wood he felt some relief; but still the enemy assaulted him with his temptations, and soon a cloud of darkness was over his mind. In all his trials he found friends to sympathize with him. Some of his friends took him to a very pious old Christian lady, by the name of Patrick, who talked very kindly and encouragingly to him, and on one occasion on a sick-bed, expecting to die, said to him, "William, do n't doubt. You will get the blessing; the Lord has a great work for you to do. You will yet take the Gospel trumpet, and publish the Savior's name to your countrymen." I well recollect having heard of this prediction of sister Patrick when I was at Zanesville, Ohio, the first time I heard of brother Nast.

From Pittsburg he went to Wheeling, Virginia, and staid over night with brother Lambdin, an old Methodist preacher, and related to him his sad and hopeless condition. Brother Lambdin encouraged him, and he went on his way through Zancsville to Kenyon College, in Knox county, Ohio, where he had a situation as a teacher. Here he found Professor Buckingham, one of his old West Point friends, and in vacation he went with the Professor to

Putnam. During this visit he heard Rev. Henry S. Fernandes preach, and under his ministry and by his kind treatment and loving Christian conversation his fears were in some degree removed. Upon his return to Kenyon College his distress of mind came on again, and he visited Putnam the second time to see brother Fernandes, with a hope of deriving aid and encouragement from him. He was not in town at the time, but brother Nast became acquainted with a brother Cubbage, who was going down the Muskingum river with a flat-boat, and who invited him to go along. Accordingly he did so. They went down the Muskingum to the Ohio, and down the Ohio to Gallipolis, and from this place he went to Mr. Newton's, where I found him, as stated in a previous chapter.

I will now give a more particular account of his conversion, and the commencement of his ministry. After his return from Western Virginia his deep distress of mind and penitence for his past sins continued, and he visited the different meetings within his reach; frequently approached the altar of prayer, and continued for hours upon his knees seeking for mercy; still there appeared no comfort for him. He afterward told me that when he was praying he seemed to have a pair of scales before him, and putting his repentance on one side, and his sins on the other, he never could make an even balance, depending too much upon his own exertion, instead of looking directly to Christ for salvation. In this condition he went to a quarterly meeting, held in the town of Danville, Knox county, Ohio; Rev. Adam Poe was the presiding elder of the district. There was a powerful

revival in progress at the meeting, and a number were awakened and converted. He, with others, went forward for the prayers of the Church; but no one there knew any thing of the peculiarities of his condition. He prayed with his usual fervor and earnestness; and, after a while, arose to leave the church; looking back upon the happy converts, and hearing them shout aloud the praise of God, suddenly these words, "There is bread enough in my Father's house," were impressed with divine power upon his mind. His spiritual eyes were opened to see the fullness of the merit of Christ. In that moment, thinking no more of his want of qualifications, he resolved to approach the mercy-seat once more. He hastened back to a corner of the house, fell on his knees to plead once more with God for mercy, but as he this time offered nothing but Jesus, the moment he opened his mouth to ask his prayer was answered. He was filled with joy unutterable and full of glory, and obtained the long-sought witness of the Spirit, clearer than the light of the sun. This was on the 17th of January, 1835. He returned to the college and told the students and professors what the Lord had done for him; called them together, and kneeled down and prayed with them, and gave thanks to God for his goodness to him.

He was soon afterward licensed to preach, and by the quarterly conference recommended to be received into the traveling connection. Rev. Adam Poe, his presiding elder, took a deep interest in his case, and presented his recommendation to the conference, held in Springfield, Ohio, in the fall of 1835.

Numerous objections were made to the establishment of a German mission, and that too by some of

the most influential members of the conference. Brother Poe, however, enlisted Rev. J. B. Finley, and some others, in behalf of the new project, and brother Nast was admitted into the conference. But, after all, such was the indifference with which it was viewed, that very limited appropriations were made for the support of the mission, and during brother Nast's first year he received an appropriation of one hundred dollars. During his second year on his large mission, for himself and his wife, he received only one hundred and fifty. He was returned to Cincinnati in 1837 and '38, when provisions were very high, but he received only one hundred dollars more; though, at the same time, he was offered a professorship in a college with a salary of eight hundred.

I have mentioned these things, not in the spirit of boasting or complaining, but to show that the providence of God opened the way and carried on this work. There had been no deep-laid plans, no great preparations or calculations on the part of the Church for carrying on this work; and now we may say, "let no man glory in men," but give all praise to God for the success with which he has crowned the labors of his servants in this department of our missionary work.

After having made these outline statements, in reference to the awakening and conversion of brother Nast, and the origin of the German missions, I close this chapter with the hope that Dr. Nast may be induced, at some future day, to publish an extended memoir of himself, and a full account of his labors among the Germans.

## CHAPTER IV.

### EXPERIENCE OF JOHN SWAHLEN

I WAS born in Switzerland, December 25, 1808; and, on the 1st of January, 1809, was dedicated to God in holy baptism. I lost my mother in my sixth year: my father's sister, a woman that feared God, discharged the duties of a mother to me. I heard her, on one occasion, relate her experience, which made a deep impression on my mind.

When I was fourteen years old I was put under instruction to prepare me for confirmation, according to the customs of the Reformed Church in that place; and if the preacher, under whose care I was, had been a converted man, I am convinced that I might then have been converted. It was a very solemn matter for me to renew my baptismal vow, in taking upon myself the obligations of confirmation; and I also had at that time an especial inclination to devote myself to God.

The preacher gave each of those that were confirmed a certificate of confirmation, containing some texts of Scripture. Mine had the following: 1 Timothy iv, 12, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity;" and Titus ii, 7, "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine *shewing* uncorruptness,

gravity, sincerity." This made a deep impression on my mind.

As I heard of migration to America I became very desirous to go. Finally, my older brother and myself concluded to go to America; and on the 12th of December, 1832, we arrived safely at New Orleans. In this strange country my mind was first more especially directed to temporal things; but, in the summer of 1835, I had many drawings of the Holy Spirit, and much desired to form an acquaintance with pious persons, but knew not where to find them. I sometimes went to Church, and was often affected under the sermon; but I saw that the people knew as little of religion as I did, and I sought for some one that would take me by the hand and lead me in the way of salvation.

I had often heard of the Methodists, but never heard any thing good of them; yet I became desirous to hear them for myself. I thought perhaps they were persecuted for righteousness' sake. How to hear them I did not know. English I could not understand, and of German Methodist preachers there were none. While thinking of the great number of Germans in Cincinnati going astray like myself, I concluded that if the Methodists were the people of God, they would also be induced to send preachers to the Germans. In this I was not disappointed, for, in the fall of the same year, the Ohio conference sent the Rev. Wm. Nast to Cincinnati, and as soon as I heard of it I inquired for him, and went to hear him the first time in the Fourth-street Methodist Church. The sermon cut me to the heart as I had never been before. The second time I heard him in the old frame

church on Main-street, called "Asbury Chapel." Here I was called on to come to a determination. He invited seekers of religion to come to the altar of prayer. Finally, I thought that the whole world can not help me when I come to die, and so arose and went to the altar, but did not obtain an evidence of the pardon of my sins. About three weeks after this, as I was going home from a meeting, with my heart all melted and broken up, I went to my chamber, several times falling on my knees. While praying to God, I, for the first time, felt the love of God powerfully shed abroad in my heart.

I thank God that he put it into the hearts of the Methodists to send preachers among the Germans. If this had not been the case I might have been cut down as a fruitless cumberer of the ground. In the year 1836 brother Nast was sent into the country, and in 1837 he was returned to the city once more to preach to his countrymen repentance and faith. Without detailing all the difficulties we had to pass through in our first efforts to form a class among the Germans in Cincinnati, I will state that, as I felt a great desire for the salvation of my countrymen, and to do something to advance the cause which had done so much for me, I was recommended for license to exhort. I received my first license in 1838, and in the fall of the same year I was sent to Wheeling to see if any thing could be done for the Germans there. Having found twelve persons who were seeking their salvation, I remained with them, exhorting them and praying with them two weeks, during which time a class of twenty-four was formed, and after a glorious two weeks' meeting I returned to Cincinnati and

reported what the Lord had done for us. Some time after this the quarterly conference at Wesley Chapel granted me license to preach, and Bishop Morris sent me back to Wheeling to take care of the little flock. In July, 1839, I was received on trial into the Pittsburg conference, and was returned as missionary to Wheeling.

God was with us in this new mission, sinners were awakened and converted, and we soon found ourselves under the necessity of building a house of worship. Although the times were hard, we went to work in good earnest. Our German brethren took a deep interest in this work, and gave very liberally to help it forward. I laid the matter before our English brethren, and they helped us liberally. We commenced the work in faith, and the Lord helped us. By the next conference our house was finished, and we had eighty-three members. This was the first German Methodist Episcopal Church built in this country. It was dedicated by brother Nast. His heart was filled with gratitude to God for that which he had done for us. But if we now look over our German missionary work, we have abundant reason to bow in gratitude before God. May he continue to bless us!

## CHAPTER V.

### EXPERIENCE OF G. A. BREUNIG.

I WAS born in Germany, of Roman Catholic parents, who used their best endeavors to have me instructed in every thing necessary to my present and everlasting well-being. I was early made acquainted with the various means of grace and sacraments, of which the Roman Catholic Church acknowledges seven; namely, baptism, confirmation, sacrament of the Lord's supper, penance, extreme unction, holy orders, and marriage. Notwithstanding she is so rich in the means of grace, and I had observed the most of them, yet I was ungodly, and became more so from day to day. I sought the pleasures of the world as much as was in my power, and my disposition for those things increased daily. I was, however, not concerned on that account, for I comforted myself with the reflection that I was a Catholic Christian. Often I heard from the pulpit, in the school, and from my parents, how much better we were off than thousands of our fellow-men who were not Roman Catholic Christians, and on that account could have no hope of salvation.

When I thought of dying, it is true, I did not expect to go to heaven directly, but to purgatory, of which I was not so much afraid, because it was only for a time. Yet, upon occasions, I felt very restless,

on account of my sins, and then would go to confession. This was always a hard task for me; because I had been taught in the school that no sins darc be kept secrct, but that each particular sin, of whatever kind it might be, must be faithfully related to the priest.

I was always very much ashamed of confessing; and it often happened that I spent the afternoon of the holy Sabbath in committing the same sins which I had confessed in the forenoon, and for which I had taken the sacrament. My conscience, however, from time to time, reminded me of death and judgment; but I endeavored to dismiss such thoughts by observing the conduct of my fellow-men, who were esteemed good Christians. Even our school-teacher, who was considered a good Christian, was a distinguished lover of card-playing and dancing; and not till some years after, when an illegitimate daughter sued him for her part of the inheritance, and in that manner made manifest his disgrace, were the eyes of the people opened to his real character. My preacher, also, was often seen at the card-table and in the dancing-room, and this, withal, on the Lord's day! May the Savior open the eyes of the deceiver as well as the deceived!

Till my twenty-third year I participated in all the pleasures of the world, although I went, from time to time, according to custom, to confession. On one occasion the Pope proclaimed a jubilee throughout all Roman Christendom. Men were to be released from all present and eternal punishment by following certain precepts; namely, to visit a certain number of churches, to repeat a certain number of prayers each day, to abstain from certain meats, go to confession

and communion; and should one die during this time, he was not to go to purgatory, but immediately to heaven. I now expected to be made free from all the burden of my sins, and therefore observed all the precepts punctiliously; but my corroding conscience did not suffer itself to be thus quieted; my soul thirsted for something else.

God by his Holy Spirit powerfully called me, and I promised him to mend my life. I began to feel an inward hatred to the sins which I had previously loved—I kept myself from all vain company, and became fond of reading and praying. I endeavored to keep my serious impressions from others; yet my father and the family soon observed that there was a great change in me. The Lord permitted me to see the nature of my sins, so that I took a dislike to ungodly people, and looked around me in vain to find good people. I then thought if I would go to America I might there serve God in solitude; but much as I wanted to go I lacked the means. By his good providence the Lord inclined the heart of a very rich neighbor of ours to go to America. I made known to him my condition and desire to go with him, and upon my request he advanced the money to pay my passage. We came over in the year 1833, and through the blessing of God in two years after our arrival I was able to pay my benefactor.

When I arrived in Baltimore I embraced the first opportunity to go to confession and to communion, and renewed my determination to lead a life well pleasing to God. Soon after this I became acquainted with a Lutheran, who was a very friendly man. As often as we conversed together on the

subject of religion deep sighs would arise from my breast. He smiled, and asked me why I sighed. Upon this I disclosed to him the condition of my soul. He praised God, and said this was the new birth. I was much astonished at what he told me, and was rejoiced to have found a man to whom I could open my heart. I endeavored, accordingly, to believe his instruction, that God had pardoned my sins; but I could believe this only at certain times; at other times my faith would forsake me entirely, because I yet felt the dominion of sin, and had a tormenting fear of death. Not till three years afterward did I experience that this was not the new birth, but only the commencement of the work of grace—that the new-born soul feels peace with God through Jesus Christ, and obtains an evidence as clear as a sick man feels when he has found a remedy for his disease. To tell, however, how I obtained this I must again return to my Lutheran friend.

He exhorted me to read the Bible, and especially the New Testament; and said when I prayed I should pray to no one but God, in the name of Jesus Christ; that I should not call upon the saints nor the Virgin Mary to make intercessions for me, for Jesus Christ is the only mediator and intercessor between God and man. He told me that the Roman Catholic held some injurious and gross errors. This I did not like to hear; and I answered that the Roman Church commands nothing that is unnecessary—that it was all good and wholesome if correctly used; yet scruples entered my mind in reference to my answer. I asked myself whether I had not kept all things that the Church commanded me, and whether

I was not, after all, a poor sinner, exposed to damnation? I therefore followed the counsel of my friend, and commenced to read the New Testament. Wisely he pointed me to the following passages: "A bishop, then, must be the husband of one wife—one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." 1 Timothy iii, 1–5. Again: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer." 1 Timothy iv, 1–5. These passages brought me to reflection. Above all, I wished to examine whether the Lutheran Bible agreed with the Catholic. I therefore borrowed a Catholic Testament. The comparison of one with the other, convinced me that these passages were the same in both. God gave me grace to believe that it was his infallible word, and that men are fallible and liable to turn aside from his word.

I now visited my friend frequently, in order to obtain an opportunity to read in his Bible. My confidence increased, and I obtained more and more light; yet I did not think that I would leave the Roman Catholic Church, and I continued two years in this determination. I went diligently to Church and embraced all opportunities to serve God. During this

time it also happened that a Catholic offered to sell me a New Testament. He said he had read enough in it in his youth, and would have nothing more to do with it. I gave him fifty cents for it, and was now very much rejoiced that I, for myself, had once obtained a New Testament. My delight in reading increased from day to day. My conscience likewise became more and more tender. I spent all my evening hours in reading. My spiritual eyes were more and more opened, and the light shone brighter and brighter. The words of the Gospel shone into my heart. The words of Jesus were to me quickening, full of comfort and instruction. Soon after this I bought myself a Bible, which I read in my shop, in order to improve every leisure moment I had in reading. I also sometimes went into the Lutheran Church, not with any intention to forsake my own, but only in order to prove the doctrine. I must, however, confess that soon I liked the preaching and singing in the Lutheran Church much better than the Roman Catholic worship; for I understood what was sung, and could join in singing; while in the mass there was nothing for my understanding nor heart—when it was over it was to me like an empty dream from which one awaketh. From the Lutheran sermons I likewise received more benefit, because I heard more of Jesus, and the word preached according to the teaching of the Bible.

I was now so far acquainted with the doctrines of the Gospel that I could no longer believe in the adoration of the saints and relics, and purgatory, and such like things. I also no longer believed in mass, because I never had obtained a benefit from it. It

was very objectionable to my mind that worship in mass and vespers were performed in the Latin language, which I could not understand. I could truly, with many others, repeat the words, but I knew not the meaning. How foolish and sinful it is to approach God in prayer without knowing what we say!

A priest who heard of me visited me during this time, in order to warn me against falling off. I told him that I intended to believe nothing but the Bible; whereupon he answered me that the primitive Christians had no Bibles, and that we dare not alone follow the Bible. I told him that the primitive Christians had the Old Testament and the four Gospels, and before the apostles departed from this world they also had the epistles in their possession. He sought, by all kinds of artful persuasion, to turn me from my simplicity and sincerity in the faith of the Gospel, and recommended a book to me which he would send me, and which I had to promise to read. This book I found full of pretended showings, that the Roman Catholic was the only infallible and true Church; but the most of the arguments were not taken from the Bible, but from the primitive fathers; and among those that were taken from the Bible the sense of the inspired writers was, in many places, misrepresented. So, through the preacher and the book, I was brought to discover that, if I read and believed the Bible, I could not remain a Roman Catholic; and if I did remain one I must lay aside the Bible, and content myself with what the priest told me. I was now brought to an inward conflict. The scoffs which I should have to endure from my acquaintances if I went out from among them; the ill-will of my

father and my relations if they should hear of it; the fearful curse pronounced by the Church upon the disobedient; these things, like great mountains, stood in my way. On the other hand, it appeared impossible for me to lay aside the word of God, for it was sweeter to my soul than honey or the honeycomb. It had drawn my heart, as the magnet draws the metal. When I read it I thought every word gave witness that the Bible contains nothing but God's truth.

Frequently while reading I would have almost involuntarily to fall upon my knees, and with a loud voice praise God for his unspeakable gift. However, after I had read the priest's book, doubts and darkness came upon me—my heart was broken down and my eyes were filled with tears. At a certain time my inward conflict rose so high that I was on the borders of despair. I did not regard the persecution of my friends. My only concern was to find the right way. I felt that I could no longer live without certainty in religion. I could not depend upon man. The Catholics could not take from me the light that God had given to me. Neither could the Lutherans, notwithstanding they did all they could, give me that peace which my soul desired. In this disposition of mind I went once, at midnight, under the open sky, threw myself upon my knees, and called upon God in the name of Jesus, "O, God, thou hast said, 'If a child should ask bread of a father, would he give him a stone? and if he should ask for a fish, would he give him a serpent? If ye, then, being evil, can give good gifts unto your children, how much more will God give the Holy Spirit to them that ask

him!' O, God, most merciful Savior, thou art not like unto man; thou knowest what I desire. I desire to get upon the right way, and walk therein. O, teach thou me what I shall do." In this manner I prayed for some length of time, and then retired to my bed again. I could, however, sleep but little, for my soul was engaged for the one thing needful. As I entered the workshop in the morning, the first thing I viewed was the Bible, which was lying by the side of the priest's book, upon a bench. I felt an inexpressible drawing toward it. I took it, kissed it, and leaped for joy. I opened and read, and every letter appeared to say to me, this is the way to truth. I looked at the priest's book with disapprobation, and returned it to its owner.

From this time I went no more to the Roman Catholic Church. Now I was pointed at by the finger of scorn. I, however, was not concerned about it. My nearest friend, a rigid Catholic, did all he could to win me back, and said I would go where Luther is. "Yes, dear brother," replied I, "this is my earnest desire. I firmly believe that he is in heaven"—when I said this, my friend turned pale, and crossed himself—"like Huss, and many others, whom the Romish Church executed, through her inquisitions; and had they the power this day, I, too, would have been led to the slaughter bench. Yet I believe that, for Jesus and the sake of his truth, I should be willing to suffer all." Whereupon my friend said I had drank whisky, and showed me the room door. I remembered that they called my Savior a wine-bibber, and said Peter was drunken with new wine, and was glad to suffer reproach for Jesus' sake. So far God had enlightened

me through his precious word, but I lacked something yet of being a Christian.

I was acquainted with some Lutheran brethren, who, like myself, were seeking the salvation of their souls. We agreed to hold a prayer meeting once a week, of which the Lutheran preacher himself was the leader. He was an honest man, who taught us the way as well as he knew it himself; but as he was infirm, he soon left us; exhorting us, however, before his departure, that we should continue to assemble for prayer, and appointing me the leader. We obeyed his instruction, but found ourselves much embarrassed, because none of us would venture to pray extemporaneously in public, notwithstanding we could pray in secret; but God helped us in our extremity. In the house where we held our meeting, I met a man whom I heard speak with the landlord on the subject of religion, and whom I loved, and in whom I had confidence. I laid our case before him, and asked him to become our leader, to which he consented. He opened our meeting with singing and prayer, read a portion of Scripture, and exhorted us from it, and then called upon us to pray. We all excused ourselves, whereupon he concluded with prayer, himself, and asked us whether we would meet again. We met again the following Sabbath, as there was no preaching in the Lutheran church at that time. After he had opened the meeting, as before, he explained to us more clearly the nature of evangelical repentance; and that upon repentance faith must follow, through which we receive the forgiveness of our sins; and that without it we could not inherit the kingdom of God. While he was speaking it pleased God to

baptize me with fire and with the Holy Ghost. It appeared to me as if mountains lay upon my heart. My burden pressed me so heavily that I cried aloud to God. I sought to restrain myself, but could not. I then cast myself into the arms of Jesus, who says: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" and, at once, I obtained peace with God. Now my mouth was opened, and I could pray and praise God; for I was made a partaker of the Spirit, through which I could cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit of God gave witness to my spirit that I was a child of God. Old things had passed away, and behold, all things had become new. Every word in the Bible spoke peace to my soul. Soon afterward my wife and sixteen others received the same blessing.

After my conversion, and the conversion of my wife, which occurred eight days afterward, we had no privileges to meet and converse with religious people in our own language; so we went to the English Methodist Episcopal Church, and joined on probation, in the year 1837. We were then living in Detroit, Michigan, where the Methodists had a good society. I became much attached to the Church, notwithstanding I could not understand nor speak much of the English language, yet the means of grace in the Church was a great blessing to me. On the 11th of April I received license to exhort, and on the 29th of June, 1839, I received license as a local preacher. In October, the same year, I went to Cincinnati, by the recommendation of Bishop Soule. Here I labored with brother Schmucker, as local preacher, till the Ohio conference, 1840, when I

was received on trial into conference and sent to Scioto mission.

I went out in the name of the Lord, to look after the Germans, scattered here and there, and to preach to them a crucified Redeemer. With many tears I scattered the seeds of Gospel truth, and during the first year several classes were formed, and a number were converted. During the second year more fruits of my labor were seen, and never will I forget the special display of the power of God in some parts of my field of labor. At the close of my second year I had one hundred and thirteen members on the Church record. The following year I was transferred to the Indiana conference.

But I can not detail the labor which I have endured, and the hardships through which I have passed. In looking back over my life, I am humbled at a recollection that my labor has not been in vain in the Lord. Had I been more holy I could have done more good. May the Lord keep us faithful!

## CHAPTER VI.

### NARRATIVE OF WILLIAM AHRENS.

In giving a short history of my conversion, my memory carries me back to scenes of my early childhood, which was spent in a village on the banks of the Weser, in northern Germany. The beauty and loveliness of nature around me, attracted the attention of my budding mind, and raised it up to nature's God. Many a time I watched the fish in the brook, the insect in the dust, and the clouds of the sky, studying, with childish simplicity, the wisdom of God, while the field of waving grain, the peaceful herds in the pasture, the flower-studded meadows, the starlit sky, the storm-cloud with lightning and thunder, impressed my mind deeply with the conviction of His goodness and power. Along with nature, revelation went hand in hand. There was in the house a large family Bible, illustrated with many engravings of highest finish, on account of which, and out of reverence for its old age, it was seldom used, but only granted to the children as a particular favor. On the lap of a beloved grandmother I studied those pictures with the greatest delight, and by her instructions and explanations I got some knowledge of the great events recorded in its history before I could read. My parents being not so poor as to require my labor, gave me the opportunity to attend the village school regu-

larly for about nine years; but, they not being able to give me a more liberal education, I had, from that time, to exchange the school for the labor of the field.

My progress in school, as also my habits at the same time, are pretty well summed up in the words of the schoolmaster while he was laying, with all his might in rapid succession, a long hazelstick on my back, "I do not punish you for any want of learning well, but for your mischievousness." The hazelstick could not cure me though; but as my mischief was generally designed to amuse my school-fellows rather than to hurt them, I was considered by them as their favorite. But I had often convictions that I was doing wrong and displeased God, forming at the same time some faint resolutions to amend, being afraid of losing heaven if I should die. These convictions were deep and the resolutions strong, when I, together with a number of others according to the custom of the Church, openly before God and the congregation, renewed the baptismal vow and was confirmed; and, since my conversion, I have believed that if that congregation had understood the plan of salvation, and had acted in accordance with it, others and I would have been converted that day; but, in place of conversion, we had, according to the custom of the place, a frolic after Church was over, and our vows to renounce the world, the lust of the flesh, and the devil with all his works, were broken before the sun set. One good deed I did that day, however, in restraining some of our number from fighting.

Being unconverted, without moral power, without experience, and without even knowing the path of life, we had stepped into the boat for the voyage of

life, like a frolicking party, without helm, oar, or compass; and, being declared Christians by the pastor and the people, we pushed off from the shore, and were thus left to the mercy of the *wind and tide*. How these carried me I must tell now in a few words. The best and most pious preacher with whom I got acquainted in Germany—our own pastor—preached that dancing and the like pleasures were innocent enjoyments; and even the preacher himself looked on, while his wife and daughters were whirling round with the peasants, in high glee. Another one, the same who prepared me for confirmation, was wont, on Sunday afternoon, to hasten to the ball-room, or to amuse the farmers, in a ninepin-alley, with tales of his university-life, which would have shocked any truly-pious heart. As whisky was considered not only a necessity of life, but a dispeller of gloom, and a generator of joy, and life, and happy feelings; and as, in the public opinion, none was accounted a brave man who had never been drunk; strong drink, therefore, accompanied every incident of a man's life; his birth, his baptism, his going to church, his marriage, his death and funeral; his joys, his sorrows, and all his business. By this any reader can easily judge of the standard of morality with which I was surrounded. Indeed, I do not know that any transgression was considered, by the great majority, a serious sin *against God*, except perjury or murder; yet, it is due to say, honesty was considered a virtue, and pretty generally practiced. Among the whole mass of a thousand souls of my native village, there was but one, a poor man, who denounced the pleasures of this world as sin in word and actions, and who de-

clared that, baptism being no regeneration, men must be born again by the Spirit in order to attain to heaven. Yet, as the older ones considered him a fool, I with the rest did the same. But, along with the general evil, there was some idea of piety in the community, which consisted in a somewhat superstitious reverence for the house and word of God, and the Lord's supper, besides occasional prayer and family worship, and in going with the "wind and tide" *only on special occasions.* This last was about the course in our own family.

Every person who had been confirmed was a communicant in the Church; and, according to public opinion, every one was a Christian, whether he swore every day and prayed never—whether he went with the tide in full or only occasionally. The dead were all thought to have entered into glory, with perhaps the exception of the murderer and perjurer. Such was the state of things with which I was surrounded, and it was about the same throughout the kingdom; though I have lived in places where it was worse. A Church of this character would, in this country, be called a Universalist one, but in my country it was the "Lutheran."

That it was next to impossible for me, or any one else under such circumstances, to go against "the wind and tide," can easily be imagined; but God, in his mercy, led me away from my native village, in my seventeenth year; and, though circumstances there were in some respects worse, yet having no acquaintance, and much work and little wages, I had not the same opportunity to mix with the crowd as I had at home. Besides this, my conviction that I was a sin-

ner, and unfit for heaven, never left me, and was often so strong and clear that the pleasures of the world lost their charm, and life was on those occasions a burden. To good and evil equally prone, I had struck on a middle road to heaven; but there was no peace to my soul.

In this state of things I returned to my birth-place, after five years' absence, where I found things going on the usual way. Beset on all sides with friends and acquaintances, and urged on by my own relatives, it was not long till I was the leader in frolicking and amusements, to a general satisfaction. But as my convictions rather increased than diminished, I felt myself soon in a most miserable condition. Sometimes the conviction that we all were on the way to hell, would strike me like lightning in the midst of the noise of the ball-room, so that I would, unconscious of myself and all that was going on around me, suddenly stand still; and, with fixed gaze, seem to see the abyss of eternal destruction opening before me; then, perhaps, I might be startled by a whisper in my ear, from one of my associates, believing that the cause of my trouble lay in my purse: "Ahrens, if you have no money I will lend you some." Such suspicion was to me a most unbearable reproach on my character, and a whisper in that direction was enough to arouse me; this the devil, who caused it, knew very well, and with hurried steps I would hasten to the bar, drown all my convictions in whisky, and run the course of a fool to the great delight of my associates.

Thus I passed years, from bad to worse, yet still I had a hope to be converted and gain heaven at last;

for all that I had learned about conversion was, that a person must leave off doing wrong and learn to do right, and when doing so God would surely forgive all transgressions. In this direction I turned my efforts along with my ever-returning convictions of sin, accompanying them with prayer and supplication. I scrupulously avoided doing wrong toward my fellowmen, and delighted in rendering them any service; and in going to Church I was one of the most regular in the whole village.

Some old people congratulated me on my piety; the pastor held my example up as an honorable one, and I met with none who suspected me for even a bad man. Indeed, it was impossible for me even once to entertain the thought that I was a Christian; but, on the contrary, feeling myself to be the greatest sinner, I lived in almost constant dread of the wrath of God. But when I saw all my efforts at converting myself fail, my promises unfulfilled, and my most solemn vows broken after every renewal, my hope began to fail also, and I felt myself nearing the brink of despair; a gloom was settling on my mind, which made the whole world around me look gloomy. Then I wished I had never been born, or had died in my infancy, and again I would pray God to destroy the life of my soul eternally; yet knowing all those wishes to be in vain, I was tempted to cast off all restraint, enjoy the world as much and as fast as possible, and thus to get some compensation for my living in hell eternally. But the mercy of God restrained me from despair on one side, and from becoming "hardened in sin" on the other. Among the many means which he used were clear and sudden dangers of death;

one of which, when I was about twenty-four years old, I will here relate, on account of something in it that is a mystery to me up to this day. Having thrown down some feed from a hayloft above the thrashing-floor, when making the first step down, I felt the same moment that my foot had missed the top bar of the ladder, and that death awaited me on the hard floor below. As I had nothing to hold to, the false step carried me down the same moment; the whole space of time allowed for thought was not more, perhaps, than three seconds; yet in that short space of time there passed before my mind, not only death and judgment, but the outline of my whole life, like a brilliant flash of lightning, extending, like a ribbon of fire, across the whole hemisphere. How the soul can perform such work, I can not comprehend.

Years before this I had entertained the thought to emigrate to America—no doubt, the Lord gave me that thought—and when my hope of ever succeeding in my efforts to live a Christian life in Germany failed, I hoped for the possibility of it in America. Glad was I when circumstances allowed me, in the fall of 1838, to set out for the "land of liberty." In September I shook the parting hand with my companions in sin, with friends and relations, and two weeping sisters and a brother. My parents had entered the better world, my beloved mother having been happily converted on her last sick-bed, making the house echo with her shouts of glory. When I left my native place, which lay about one day's journey from the port of Bremen, where I took ship, my heart was tossed, between hope and fear, like a frail bark on the stormy ocean. It longed after rest, and was fully

convinced that the world, with all its pleasures and riches, could not give this rest. It had a faint impression that rest was alone found in God; but all the different ways I had tried failed, and the right and sure one I did not know. My burden was too heavy and the heart too full; I fell on my knees, lifted my heart up in prayer to the same God whom I had offended so long, and begged from him the forgiveness of my sins and a safe journey, as also to lead me to a communion of true Christians, promising to fulfill my vows in America.

Under the shadow of his protecting wings I arrived safely at New Orleans, on the 6th of November, where I met a schoolmate and former associate in sin. With his help I soon got work where he was employed; but for serving God I found circumstances most unfavorable, especially as my schoolmate was poisoned with infidelity. But once he told me that at Cincinnati there was a curious sort of people. "They pray much; but they do not drink, nor dance, nor gamble, nor swear; they are all fools," said he. While he uttered these words, the thought struck me, "That is the people I have for years longed to see," and at the same time I made up my mind to go and see them.

Early in the morning of the 2d of May, 1839, after a safe passage to Cincinnati, I left the boat, and soon found an acquaintance from my native place, who had emigrated some years before me. At breakfast it was arranged that I should board with them; and when the husband had gone to his shop, his wife soon turned the conversation on religious subjects. She spoke of the wonderful dealings of God with them in this coun-

try, how he had shown them a better way to heaven than we had ever known in Germany, how happy they were in pursuing this way, and so on. I listened with astonishment, having known her course in Germany very well, and wondered greatly at the change of which she spoke, and which all her actions seemed to confirm, believing and thanking God at the same time, in my heart, that he had heard my prayer about bringing me to his people. After a while she said that they had left the Lutheran Church and joined a Church called the Methodist. A thunder-clap from a clear sky could not have astonished me more than hearing these words; what I a few moments ago believed to be an answer of my prayer, I now believed to be a punishment of God, who, for my breaking all my most solemn vows, had led me into the hands of the most dangerous enemies of Christ, in order to deliver me the more surely into the hands of the devil. In great anxiety I hastened out of the house, taking my friend who had come from New Orleans with me. When we got into the open air I said to him, "Henry, we have fallen into evil hands; what shall we do?" "What do you mean?" said he. "Why, can't you see? these people have denied the faith and gone over to Antichrist; they belong to that strange sort of people which the Bible-designates the 'harlot of Babylon,' with her mysterious cup of sorceries, possessing a supernatural power to fascinate men and deliver them over to the devil; and how shall we escape such a power except we leave them immediately?" But my friend Henry told me that he did n't care any thing about it, neither was he at all afraid of them. A stranger, I wandered about the streets; but being

unable to find a suitable boarding-place, I was compelled to return. The next day a man entered the house, whom my suspicious mind set down as *one of them;* I watched every word and movement, but could not detect any thing wrong. Just as he was about to leave he stepped up to me, spoke a few kind words, and then briefly stated, in the plainest style, that the sinner was saved by grace, that the greatest sinner could be saved, and that it was possible for every one to know that *God had forgiven his sins*, and that he was an heir of heaven. If an angel had come down from heaven and told me the same words, I could not have been more convinced that this was the true Gospel than I was then, and at the same moment I resolved in my heart that if it was possible yet *for me* to get such assurance, I would not rest till I had it, let it cost what it would. He then told me how to read the Bible, and how to pray, and then bade me "good-by." This messenger of peace was the Rev. Peter Schmucker, German missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

With this key, "saved *by grace*," I commenced to read the Bible, and the more I read the more I wondered how I could have read and heard that a thousand times and not have understood it. But with the increase of light my sins swelled to an immeasurable number and size; even what I had considered innocent pleasures, I saw to be great abominations before the Lord. Nothing pained me more than to see how I had trampled under foot the love and mercy of God; to reflect on his goodness bestowed upon me and my ungratefulness made my heart almost break. Gladly would I have given a thousand lives if I had had them

in my possession, if with it I could have undone my ungratefulness. For three months I made use of every public opportunity when mourners were invited to the altar of prayer; but my sins, appearing to me to be greater than the price that was paid for them, I was hindered from believing and being saved. And if I had not received such clear witness of my own redemption I would up to this day doubt its possibility.

Having heard of the wonders of redeeming grace at camp meetings, I longed for the day of its commencement, and when it arrived I hastened with others to attend it; but I had to lie down for the first night with the load of sin upon me as heavy as ever. Next morning, after sermon, when the mourners were invited to come forward, my soul was tossed between hope and fear. Soon I found myself in a fearful struggle; my sins appearing now in such fearful colors as I had never seen them before; heavier and heavier grew their weight upon me, and still it increased; and with it the agony of my soul, for the light from the mercy-seat decreased in the same degree till the last ray of hope was gone. By this time my voice was gone, and my physical strength was leaving me also, till body and soul sank down in despair. Now I beheld a horrible picture. I hung over the brink of the unmeasurable depth of the bottomless pit filled with darkness, while the flames of hell and damnation licked my soul. I felt myself a condemned sinner. At the same time my heart testified that God was perfectly good and righteous, and the only and last wish I had was that I might declare his goodness and righteousness to devils and men in

hell. I then felt my strength revived some, but soon and suddenly the thought crossed my mind, you have been deceived by the Methodists; they are nothing but seducers, and their work is to deliver souls over to the devil. This brought on another struggle, which led me to examine myself for what I was there—and if I ever examined myself honestly surely I did it then. The result of it was, "I do not wish any thing but the favor of God and the forgiveness of my sins, if it is at all possible to get it; and, if he should grant it, I will be his own in body, soul, and all that I have for time and eternity, cost what it will; if he will receive me then no tribulation, nor life, nor death shall separate me from him; whatever he may require of me that will I do—his will shall be my rule, his glory the object in all my undertakings, and, as to the Methodists, I never have joined them, and I never will do it." Hereupon I had a clear witness in my conscience that my intention was without guile, and that as long as this was the case God would not suffer me to fall a prey to the devil. This witness brought again a ray of hope that God might accept the offer and give me the forgiveness of my sins. Then the Spirit of God helped my infirmities; by degrees I was enabled to behold the love of Christ to a ruined world, and as I felt myself to be one of the lost sinners, so I felt myself to be also an object of his love, and by the grace of God I was soon enabled to believe, without a doubt, he hath loved me and has given himself for me. And after my heart seemed to be emptied of all its wickedness a stream of life, and power, and glory was flowing into it—the love of God was shed abroad in my heart by the Holy

Ghost—the Spirit of God bearing witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. With wondering and delight I beheld a real change in every thing that surrounded me. There was glory above me, and glory beneath me, and glory around me, and glory in my soul. This was on the 17th of August, 1839.

Soon after my conversion I found that I had done wrong in resolving never to join the Methodist Church; but having solemnly promised the Lord "to do whatever he might require of me," and he having joined my heart to the Methodists in the act of my conversion, and showed me now plainly that it was my duty to connect myself with them in name, I did so.

That solemn vow, "to be the Lord's forever, and to do whatever he might require of me," has been a powerful bond upon me till this day, and by it I have been drawn along paths which, in all probability, I would not have trod without it. It has caused me to obey the call of the Church to preach the Gospel as a missionary and traveling preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church; for, though I had a "burning after souls" from the moment of my adoption, I never had a special call to the ministry as I heard others have. When the brethren had argued away all my reason against that call I cast myself with childlike simplicity into the arms of everlasting mercy, praying God that if the brethren were acting contrary to his will, and if I should do wrong in accepting this call, that he should overrule the whole to his own glory, not doubting that he *would* do it.

My first license to preach I received on the 20th of October, 1841, signed by Richard Corwin and P.

Schmucker. In the fall of 1842 I was received on probation in the Kentucky conference, held in Louisville, Kentucky, and there I received my appointment for the same place. The mission had been begun by Rev. P. Schmucker two years before, and was made a self-supporting station at the same conference. Our society in Louisville, therefore, has the honor of being the first in the whole missionary work among the German population that was stricken out from the list of missions; and I think it an honor to be the first German itinerant preacher of our Church who was sent out without any support from the missionary treasury.

Since the day of my conversion I have felt the conviction that next to God I owe the Methodist Episcopal Church a debt that I never can pay; but I resolved then to labor for her welfare with all of my abilities. This resolution I have so far carried out, and I find it in my heart as fresh as ever.

As to the fulfilling of my vows I need not say any thing; but since I made them the glory of God my Redeemer has been my chief object, and to do good among my fellow-men has been my chief delight, and my hope of everlasting life rests solely on the merits of my Redeemer. To him be glory *now* and forever, amen!

## CHAPTER VII.

### ENGELHARDT RIEMENSCHNEIDER.

I WAS born in 1815, in Kurhessen, Germany, and brought up according to the strict forms of the Reformed Church. My parents spared no pains to give me good instruction; but I was a stranger to the grace of God, and can recollect no time, although I was twenty years old when I left Germany, in which I felt any special concern for the salvation of my soul. Now, removed from the house of my parents, and deprived of the exhortations of my affectionate mother, I tore myself loose from all restraints and drank iniquity like water. Had it not been for the grace of God, I know not where my course would have ended. The first time my heart was affected was under a sermon from these words: "If these should hold their peace the stones would cry out." At the conclusion of the sermon I felt that I must amend my ways or be eternally lost. I made this known afterward to one of my friends; who, in a rationalistic manner, said "the priests always make it worse than it is;" and he and others of my friends succeeded in quieting my fears again, and I continued for some time longer to live undisturbed in sin. The second time I was awakened to see my condition was in a tavern, where I and several young friends, on a Sabbath evening, were together drinking wine. As I stood at the bar

and reflected upon our conduct, I came to a clear conviction that we were on our way to ruin, and the more I thought of it the more dreadful the place appeared to me. The sins of my whole life appeared in dreadful array before me, and the tears rolled from my eyes. I took one of my friends with me and went into a retired place, where I wept all night, and confessed my sins as if my friend were a priest. My friend, who knew as little of true religion as myself, comforted me, and said that those things of which I spoke were no sins at all; and in this way he sought to ease my heart with false comfort. If in that night a religious man had been with me who could have directed me to the Lamb of God, I might have been converted immediately. But, by indulgence in sin, these feelings passed away again, and I fell into a deep spiritual slumber, and became more ungodly than I had previously been. O the wonderful mercy of God that kept me from falling into a state of final impenitence!

I became so impatient under restraints that I was no longer content to remain in America, and therefore resolved to go to one of the seaport cities with a view of making arrangements to return to Europe, where I had something of my inheritance coming to me. The greatest difficulty in my way was that I was not allowed to violate the Sabbath here as I had been accustomed to in Germany, in playing, dancing, and frolicking.

I went to Pittsburg to visit my uncle before starting to Germany, and here I engaged to work for a short time. About this time Mr. Nast, from Cincinnati, made a visit to Pittsburg and preached to the Ger-

mans. The school-house in which he preached was near the house in which I worked; and, although I thought nothing of the Methodists, yet as the preaching was in German, I concluded to go and hear him. The first sermon that I heard went like a two-edged sword through my soul, and I again felt myself a great sinner. In this call I received a strong impression that this might be the last, and I went home with a determination to give myself to God. I now, for the first time, commenced praying upon my knees. Sleep departed from my eyes, and I spent whole nights in wrestling with God in prayer. When I went to the table to take food the impression came to me, "You are not worthy of it," and so I often retired from the table without my meal. With these feelings I continued to visit the Church. Brother Nast circulated the "Articles of Faith and General Rules of the Methodist Church," printed in the German language, of which I took a copy and was thankful for it. I read the General Rules with great attention, and concluded if the Church kept these rules it must be a pious one.

Upon the following evening, after the General Rules were distributed, brother Nast said, "All those who have read our General Rules and think they can get along better by uniting with us in our society can give us their names." I was convinced that this was the place for me; but I was anxious that some one should lead the way, as there was then no German Methodist society formed there; however, as none went, I resolved to follow my convictions, and went forward and gave my name to the Church, with the determination fully to consecrate myself to the service

of God, whereupon about twenty followed; and this was the commencement of the Pittsburg mission.

Notwithstanding I had now given my name to the Church, and saw myself as a sinner exposed to the wrath of God, yet I had too much pride and fear of man to allow me to go to the altar of prayer, to which invitations were given from time to time, till one Saturday evening, when brother Nast preached from the subject of Naaman's leprosy. Under this sermon I was so affected that I suddenly fell from the bench and began to cry aloud to God for mercy. My heart was so broken up with sorrow that I could not contain myself. Brother Nast and others prayed for me, and I became somewhat quieted, but did not find peace. From this time I continued to cry for mercy day and night for three weeks. Some of my former friends said that the Methodists had put a bad spirit into me; others thought I was crazy, and as I was daily growing thinner and paler, it was generally thought that I would not live long. I felt my load of sins so heavy that I continued to cry to the Lord not to let me die till I had obtained peace and pardon, and this I continued for three weeks, till one evening at a prayer meeting I gave myself, as a poor lost, condemned sinner, to Christ, trusting alone in his merits. It was then that the day of grace dawned in my heart. The joy that I felt I could not describe, and the evidence of my acceptance was so clear that no enemy could make me doubt it.

Immediately after my conversion I felt a desire to do something to advance the cause of God and to lead sinners to the Savior. Yet I did not think of preaching, notwithstanding that I felt inwardly moved to

lead all men to Christ. I thought that none would ever be allowed to preach who had not gone through a regular course of theological study at a university.

I held on my way and endeavored to do all my duties, and to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. After some time I was recommended for license to exhort, and received it from brother Kenney. I went to Wheeling to live, and on one occasion, as brother Swahlen had to be absent from Wheeling over Sunday, he left it with me to speak to the people. But as I had never spoken before to a large assembly, I was full of fear and anxiety all the week. The enemy tempted me to decline going, for fear of being put to shame. I, however, resisted the temptation, and on Sabbath morning I went to the Church with an anxious heart, and found some literary and professional persons there. I arose with trembling, and read the third chapter of the Gospel of John, and then gave out a hymn, and sung and prayed. After the prayer I felt such liberty and such a freedom of spirit that I could have stood before princes to declare the word of God. I commenced to speak, and felt the power and unction from on high upon me. I came to the conclusion that if God wished me to declare his truth he could prepare me for this great work, and I was determined to obey his call.

After brother Swahlen had returned, he requested me to go some twenty miles into the country, where there was a number of Germans who had no preacher. I went, and my first visit was crowned with the conversion of five or six souls. This encouraged me, and I afterward visited these people every two weeks, and

each time remained eight days with them. The effect was, that in four months about forty souls were converted. Here I was delivered from all doubts in reference to my call to the ministry. The quarterly conference gave me license to preach, and a recommendation to the annual conference, where I was received; and I thank God that he has given me living epistles of my ministry.

NOTE.—Brother Riemenschneider is now laboring as one of our missionaries in Germany. His field of labor is Zurich, Switzerland. The narrative here given of his religious experience was written about ten years ago.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### EXPERIENCE OF LUDWIG S. JACOBY

I NEVER belonged to those who doubted the existence of God, for the deep impressions made by the admonitions of my pious mother could not be entirely erased from my mind. I had the name of an evangelical Lutheran in Germany, for so testifies my certificate of baptism at least; but I had no idea of true Christianity, although a New Testament, which had been presented to me, was my continual companion. Some time before my conversion I frequently read in it; but I often cast it from me, exclaiming, "This can not possibly be true."

A year after my arrival in this country, and about the beginning of November, 1839, I came to Cincinnati, where I still continued in my old habits. Every Sabbath day I visited some Church; I attended worship sometimes in German, and sometimes in English, for I understood the latter tolerably well; but I must confess that I usually went from Church as I had gone there.

Of a German Methodist Church I had never heard. One evening, however, a young man, to whom I gave instruction in English, asked me if I would not go with him to the German Methodist Church, on Sabbath evening, as it was a real theater—a place of much amusement. At first I had no especial desire

to go; but the following Sabbath a number of young persons came to my lodging, and urged me to go. Brother Breunig, at that time a local preacher, made his first attempt to preach on that evening. His text was the parable of the prodigal son. I could find nothing to make sport of, excepting his singular expressions and pronunciation, he and I being from different parts of Germany; and he had, of course, peculiar provincialisms. His preaching was, to me, a novelty, as I never had had an idea that a plain, uneducated man would attempt so great an undertaking. I would have been glad to go to prayer meeting on the following Thursday evening: I had an especial anxiety to go; but could not find time, as I was then giving lessons in the evening. The following Sabbath evening I was one of the first in the Church, and took my seat not far from the pulpit. Brother Nast preached from, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." Satan suggested to me that I should look right earnestly at him, to see if I could not make him laugh. I did so; and instead of making him laugh, became myself an attentive hearer. Among other remarks he made the following: "There may be a Saul among us, whom God will convert into a Paul," which struck me, and went to my heart. Hitherto I had been immersed in the vices of the world; but now I was brought to reflection. On the following Tuesday evening I went to class meeting. The union and love which I there found among the people, and the happiness which appeared impressed on every countenance, made me feel solitary and forsaken; and I stood absorbed in reflection, till an aged sister asked me why I appeared so sorrowful. I could find

no peace nor comfort at home, and felt very unhappy wherever I was. On the following Thursday evening I attended prayer meeting; but my knees refused to bend, till one of the brethren prayed that God would grant that sinners might bend their stubborn knees before it should be too late.

On Friday I was invited to the house of our dear brother Nast: I soon obtained such confidence in him that I opened to him the state of my mind. He directed me to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world; and, after he had given me a most kind exhortation, we bowed our knees together before a throne of grace, and he offered up a fervent prayer to God for me. After which I, for the first time, raised my voice in earnest prayer to God for the pardon of my sins. I then left brother Nast, with the firm resolution that henceforth I would forsake the world, and wholly devote myself to God. At home, I cast myself down to pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; but as I had pronounced this name, a voice within spoke to me, "Thou hypocrite, how canst thou pray in the name of Him on whom thou dost not believe?" but I did not suffer myself to be disturbed. It soon, however, appeared to me as if the room was filled with people charging me with hypocrisy; yet I continued, and from that moment I could pray with confidence in the name of Jesus, because through his name *alone* we can be saved.

I now commenced tearing myself loose from my former associates; and, at the first opportunity, on Monday before Christmas, 1839, I joined the Church during love-feast. As those were called to approach

the altar who wished an interest in the prayers of the pious, I did not confer with flesh and blood, and for eight evenings went thither. Twelve days I sought the Lord earnestly, and attended the watch-night. The new year was commenced with prayer, and the children of God sang the songs of Zion, and were filled with joy. I remained in prayer on my knees. I thought that my heart would break under the burden that lay upon me. I sighed for deliverance; and, blessed be God! not in vain. The Lord visited me, and I was blessed with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. I rose from my knees rejoicing, and embraced heartily my, till then almost unknown, brethren, and joyfully declared that the Lord had delivered me. Never shall I forget that hour, neither here on earth nor in heaven. The Lord Jesus showed his mercy to a great sinner, and his grace was the more magnified. I had a happy New-Year's day. In the afternoon, however, the former friend who first took me to the Methodist church, came to see me; he mocked, and scoffed, and called me strange names. I sought to quiet him by giving him an account of my conversion; but he only became the more abusive, and was actually about attempting to beat me. I thereupon said to him, quite composedly, "If you had treated me so before I was converted I would have put you out of doors; but now I will rather go myself." So I went away sadly, and I understood he quit my house in a rage. This circumstance made me dejected, and in the evening I went anew to the mourners' bench. Brother Nast asked me if I had not professed to have found the Savior? I told him I had, and related to him the reason of my mourning.

He exhorted me to earnest prayer; and soon I found the joy which I had experienced return to my heart.

Now a new period in my life commenced. My delight in the things of this world had come to an end; and it was my greatest joy to be united with the children of God. Our dear father Schmucker at the time alluded to had charge of the society; and to him, as well as to brother Nast, under God, I owe many thanks for the encouragement they gave me to go on in the service of the Lord. They took me by the hand and led me as parents lead a child when it first attempts to walk. I ought to remark that brother Nast, in my first visit to him, lent me Fletcher's Appeal. This book contributed much to convince me of my lost estate; and after my conversion it was of great advantage to me in my growth in grace.

From the first moment of my conversion I felt a great desire to communicate to my countrymen my own happiness, and the power of God, as exhibited in the Gospel. But I was yet weak myself. I therefore sought to strengthen myself by the word of God and the reading of other religious books, but more especially in the exercise of prayer. I can honestly say, that the first three months after my conversion were the happiest in my life. I did not leave my room—which was in the upper story of the Methodist Book Concern—except to attend Church. The Lord blessed me, and I grew in the knowledge of things divine. One evening brother Schmucker took me into the pulpit to exhort after him. I knew but little of what he preached, for my whole frame trembled, and I could scarcely collect myself for prayer; yet when

he closed I arose in the name of the Lord, and words were given me to speak to the congregation. I received license to exhort, and commenced my labors, trusting in the Lord. I especially visited the workmen on the canal; but, alas! saw but little fruit. Yet I confided in my Savior, whose Spirit moved me to proclaim his holy Gospel. And I am convinced that the seed which, by the grace of God, I scattered in weakness at my appointments—of which I filled one nearly every Sabbath—has not remained entirely without fruit.

In the month of March, 1841, Rev. George C. Light, a preacher of the Missouri conference, came to Cincinnati and talked to brother Nast about the necessity of sending a German missionary to St. Louis, and expressed the desire of the English brethren to have one there. Brother Nast and brother Light went to Bishop Morris, who was then in Cincinnati, and consulted him on this subject. And in a few days after the Bishop sent for me, and asked whether I was willing to go to St. Louis as a missionary. Up to this time I had preached nearly every Sunday, but my theological knowledge was limited. I told the Bishop of my deficiency in this respect, and that I was too feeble to take such an important charge, and therefore would prefer at least to remain another year in my present relation. At the same time I was willing to devote myself wholly to the Lord, and would submit the whole matter to the judgment of my brethren. The Bishop encouraged me, and explained to me how the preachers were trained in the Methodist Church; and told me to keep myself in readiness to start as soon as brother Nast returned from

the east, during which time I was engaged to edit the Apologist. Brother Nast returned in the middle of July, and toward the end of the month I with my wife, and a little daughter five weeks old, set out in the name of the Lord for St. Louis, where we arrived on the first of August, 1841.

Brother Wesley Browning, who was then stationed preacher there, with his pious and kind lady, now in heaven, received us with much kindness, so that we did not feel as strangers in a strange city. St. Louis was at that time a wicked place, and the Germans distinguished themselves especially by profaning the Sabbath. There was one German Church there that had an orthodox preacher, but this was all that could be said about it, for there was nothing known of practical Christianity. I found in connection with the English Methodist Church brother Hoffman, who had been converted by reading "Arndt's True Christianity;" but he was not acquainted with the English language sufficiently to be instructed in religion by the preaching. Our joy was great to find one with whom we could converse in our own tongue about the love of God, and one too who understood the language of Canaan well. I sought as soon as possible to arrange my household affairs, which I accomplished in two days. Then I rented a small church from the Presbyterians.

Brother Hoffman and I went through the city with tracts, and invited the people to come to our meeting. The following Sabbath morning, after I had committed the whole work in earnest prayer to God, we went to the church. It was ten o'clock, and no one there yet, and our service was appointed to commence at half-

past ten o'clock. My wife remarked, sadly, "You will have to preach to us and to the empty benches to-day." With that I commenced to ring the bell of our chapel, and gradually the people came in till the house was full. The Lord gave me grace to declare his word; and, after I had invited them earnestly to come again in the evening, we went home joyfully, thanking God for his goodness. In the evening the house was not only filled with attentive hearers, but the whole yard around the church was filled with people. I gave out a meeting for singing, a prayer meeting, and an appointment to preach for the following week. The people came, and I labored on joyfully. I soon became acquainted with another German family residing eight miles from the city, who also belonged to the English Church, and I preached once a week at their house.

In the mean time I commenced to preach in the market-house on Sunday afternoon, in the south part of the city. The German paper warned me not to do this, or means would be sought to prevent me. Yet I proceeded in the name of the Lord to declare his word. On the following Sabbath a large congregation was assembled, and after I had mounted the butcher's block, and was just commencing my sermon, I was violently pushed down, and some had commenced to strike me, and to talk against me. I sought to quiet them, but all to no purpose. What would have been the result I know not, but the Lord sent me a deliverer. An American took me by the collar of my coat and led me out through the enraged German crowd, and brought me to the house of an English brother. The police took the matter in hand,

and two of the ringleaders were fined. At the same time some of my hearers sought to disturb me in the church.

I adopted measures to control these disturbers of the peace and to keep them in order. I applied to the Mayor to send some of the watchmen to my assistance, which he willingly did. I would remark here, that one of these watchmen, who was a German, was converted to God in the following year.

In September I went to the conference, where I was ordained deacon. During my absence my wife kept up the prayer meetings. This year brother John Swahlen was sent to Pinkney mission, Missouri, and brother John Hartman to Belleville, Illinois. When I returned from the conference I continued to preach and hold prayer meetings, and soon a number became awakened, and commenced regarding themselves as members of my charge, notwithstanding I had not called on any of them to join our Church, and I did not wish to invite them to join till they had experienced conversion, for the people were very ignorant in reference to every thing concerning vital godliness. I addressed a letter to father Schmucker, and asked his advice what to do, that the people might become converted. "Continue to preach, to exhort, and to pray," was the answer.

There was a woman who had much influence among the Germans, and constantly visited my meetings; went about among the people, and told them that what I preached was the truth, but told those who were awakened that they must not become Methodists.

This induced me, on the 22d of November, 1841,

for the first time, to give an invitation to join the Church, and twenty-two persons united with the Church, after I had read the General Rules. On the following Monday there came an old woman, one of my members, to my house, and complained that her burden was more than she could bear. My wife and I prayed earnestly with her, and she soon obtained peace and went home. On her way she was filled with the joys of salvation, and hastened to the house to tell her husband what it was to have the pardon of sins. He was deeply awakened by this, and commenced earnestly to seek God, and soon found the Savior, and went on his way rejoicing. Our aged mother Klotts, the first-fruit of my labors, has exchanged earth for heaven.

I will here relate another occurrence. A woman came to our house and requested us to pray for her; we prayed earnestly for her. She went home in a rage, and told her husband that we had prayed for her as if she had been a thief or a murderer. They both withdrew, and became worse than ever. Now my members became, one after another, converted to God—some in their houses, some at their daily employment, and others at prayer meetings and under preaching. The small society was united in love, and my soul praised the Lord. How gracious was the Lord to me at that time! I was accustomed to study my sermons on my knees, which custom I have kept up ever since.

Notwithstanding my want of experience, the Lord helped me, so that I seldom preached without feeling the power of the Lord upon me. I had in those times no very severe temptations; yet the old Adam

sometimes sought to gain a victory. Still, I lived in close communion with my Savior. When I went out into the city I took a text with me, on which I fixed my mind, and this kept my thoughts from wandering. I distributed many tracts and Testaments and Bibles, with which I was abundantly supplied by the Tract Society. What often grieved me was the opposition I met with from my unconverted countrymen, to which the newspapers contributed not a little. When I passed by them they applied all kinds of opprobrious epithets to me, and sometimes threw dirt at me, but I rejoiced in the approbation of my Savior. On Christmas, 1841, we held our first quarterly meeting. I expected help from my brethren in the ministry, but they had to attend to their own work at this time. But the Lord helped me, and I preached, notwithstanding my poor health, fourteen times in nine days. The sacrament and love-feast was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Many sinners were awakened and converted in this memorable time. My labors in the country were also not without fruit, for there were a few souls converted there, and among them three who had previously belonged to the Papist Church.

On the 18th of March we had our first quarterly conference; Wesley Browning was presiding elder. It was resolved to build a church. We then had forty members. We procured a very suitable lot, 52 by 110 feet, which was then worth $1,400, for which we had to pay $500, payable in ten years. Brother Hartman visited us occasionally with some of his members from the Belleville mission. Now came a hard time for me; the money had to be collected. I

received only small sums, and the building was contracted for at $1,200. But the Lord helped, and money was on hand in due time. After we had laid the corner-stone, some of the wicked Germans got a bottle of whisky and poured on it, and in this way sought to make sport of us. But one of these, in the following year, was converted to God. The building went on rapidly, and on the 7th of August I had the pleasure of dedicating the church to the service of the Most High. How happy did I feel then, in a brick church 32 feet wide by 50 long, with a small bell! Our Sabbath school marched, at the ringing of the bell, from the old church to the new one. And this was now filled, for it was something strange that the despised Methodists, of whom it had been prophesied that they would soon come to an end, now had a church of their own. I must mention that our English brother, Nathaniel Childs, helped us very much in the building of this church. The Lord remember him, and all who helped us, and bless them!

NOTE.—Brother Jacoby was the first missionary sent by the Methodist Episcopal Church to Germany. He is now superintendent of these missions.

## CHAPTER IX.

### EXPERIENCE OF C. H. DOERING.

I WAS born on the 27th of August, in 1811, in Springe, a small town near the city of Hanover, kingdom of Hanover, Germany; and, in my youth, had every opportunity to obtain a liberal education, and become a good scholar; but I contracted a passion for reading novels and other light and pernicious books. The reading of these not only diminished my zeal for study, but also greatly vitiated my morals.

I was often under the influence of serious impressions, but more especially at the time of my confirmation, which generally takes place in the fourteenth year. At this time the baptismal vow is renewed, and the sacrament of the Lord's supper is received, and the participants are considered members of the Church. This is the usage of the Lutheran Church, in which I was brought up. I have no doubt, if I had had at that time a true spiritual guide to lead me to the feet of Jesus, I would have remembered my Creator in the days of my youth, and would have given my heart to the Savior, and experienced his renewing grace. I received religious instruction from my eighth to my fourteenth year, in the school, but I do not recollect that ever the necessity of regeneration, and the mode of obtaining it, was explained to us. Although the Lutheran Church in that part of

the country had the form of godliness, the power thereof I never saw manifested in it. There may be, however, many individual cases of true piety which never came under my personal observation. Family devotion and social prayer meetings I never met with nor heard of. The whole of our religious worship was performed on the Sabbath, and this only during a few hours. The greatest part of the day was spent in public amusements, playing cards, dancing, visiting theaters, etc.; and these amusements were participated in even by our clergymen.

Being from childhood somewhat religiously inclined, I had some idea of devoting myself to the ministry, which in our country is chosen either by the child or parent like any other occupation, without any regard to a divine call from the Head of the Church; but, being without the means to go through the required collegiate and theological course, which extends from six to eight years and sometimes longer, I entered upon mercantile pursuits. I was apprenticed for five years, and during this time, in comparison with many other young men in my situation, was leading a retired and outwardly moral life, though my former serious impressions had vanished away. Having finished my apprenticeship, I served as clerk one year in Bremen and three years in Gottingen. During the period of nearly ten years I did not visit the house of God more than a few dozen times, and only once partook of the holy sacrament. To the best of my recollection during this time I did not once open my Bible, deeming it sufficient to have it among my books. In my twenty-second or twenty-third year I was much given to despondency, and was often tempted to self-

destruction, but never a single thought entered my mind with regard to my future fate. How, in the easiest way, to get rid of my life, which was a burden to me, was all that occupied my thoughts on this subject. This state of mind was chiefly produced by looking too far into the future, and always meditating how to get through the world, having no means myself. But the mercy of God spared me, not permitting Satan to tempt me farther, but only to suggest these wicked thoughts. It is now with deep regret and mortification that I look back upon the years of my youth, but they are gone forever.

During my stay in Bremen I heard a great deal about the United States of America, and of many who had gone there; this created a like desire within me; and, in order to prepare myself for such an event, I began to study the English language, which study I pursued for several years. My desire to emigrate to this country became stronger and stronger. I communicated it to my mother, but could not obtain her consent. Others of my friends dissuaded me from taking such a step, especially my former teacher; and among the reasons which he advanced was this, that there was not the least spark of religion in America—the people caring for nothing except to make money. But all efforts to deter me from my purpose were vain; I was determined to go—to leave home, friends, all, for an unknown land. I left an aged mother, she not knowing my real design; and, after a long but prosperous voyage of fifty-one days, I arrived, in the middle of September, 1836, at the city of Baltimore. Here I met with some acquaintances from the old country, with whom I staid about

a week, looking for employment, but I found none which suited me. During my stay one of my acquaintances wanted to show me a great curiosity, and this was a colored Methodist meeting. I went, but hearing a dreadful noise in the house, I was afraid to venture in, and stood before the door and wondered at this strange phenomenon, that was strange to me at that time. From Baltimore I went to Wheeling, Virginia, intending from thence to go to Dayton, Ohio, where I was recommended to a young man engaged in mercantile business.

On my arrival in Wheeling I was met by a countrywoman of mine, who persuaded me to stay there. After a few days I found employment as clerk in a dry goods store, with an English brother, James M. Wheat, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who treated me very kindly, although an entire stranger to him. Having my boarding in his own family, I was invited to attend family worship. He read, sung, and then they kneeled down for prayer. This was all new to me; I never before had witnessed a family worship. Their kneeling down was against my feelings. I hesitated a few moments, not knowing what to do, whether to kneel down with them or not; but reflecting that it could do me no harm I kneeled down and continued to do so afterward. A few days subsequently, when I was unpacking my books, my employer perceived a Bible among them; he expressed his gratification to see it, having thought that I, perhaps, belonged to the Roman Catholic Church; at this I was highly offended, and asked him whether he thought I was a heathen, in supposing I had no Bible. However, I was one in reality, having

only the name of a Christian, since I had not read my Bible, as remarked before, for the space of at least ten years, although carrying it constantly with me. I relied upon this, upon my baptism, my confirmation, and the leading of an outward moral life for my salvation.

For the purpose of improving my knowledge of the English I began to visit the English Methodist Church, which was at that time under the pastoral charge of Rev. Wesley Browning. Through the influence of the Holy Spirit my eyes were gradually opened. I began to feel my sins, to become aware of my lost condition, and made the determination to begin to seek the Lord. Invitations for penitents to kneel at the mourners' bench were given from time to time, but this was again entirely new to me, and at first I did not know what to make of it. I felt, however, that this was the very place to which I should go. Shame and fear for a long time kept me from taking this decisive step, and I put it off from day to day. By the help of the Lord I soon began to perceive the stratagem of the enemy of my soul; and I felt that in this way, by putting it off, I never would be reconciled to God. At length, with a broken heart and a trembling step, I hastened to the altar of prayer to seek the Lord. Divine light from on high broke in upon me; I began earnestly to pray, and the pardoning love of God began to fill my bosom. I felt thankful to the Lord for what he had done for me. I now saw his wise purpose in guiding my wandering feet to this country to save my soul from eternal destruction.

A love for the souls of my fellow-men now entered

my bosom; with compassion I looked upon the thousands of my countrymen who were in the same condition as myself. The desire to devote myself to the service of the Lord took hold upon me, and it became stronger and stronger. But thinking myself incompetent for such a work, I thought it best, as a preparatory step for entering the vineyard of the Lord, to obtain a further collegiate education. About this time, 1838, there was only one German mission, and this in Cincinnati, and no German Methodists yet in Wheeling; but I had heard of brother Nast and of the intended project to edit a German paper. To him I wrote, introducing myself to his acquaintance, and informing him at the same time of my intention. I was recommended by brother Browning, from whom and his sainted companion I received all kindness, to Alleghany College, Meadville, to which I proceeded, and where I remained in the pursuit of my studies three years and a half. During this time the German missions began rapidly to spread, and I received several times very urgent letters from brother Nast to enter the active work; but, counseled by my friends and Bishop Soule, who was at that time on a visit in Meadville, I continued till I had finished my course.

In the year 1840 I received license as exhorter; and in the last year of my stay in the College, I began to preach to the Germans in Meadville and its vicinity before large and attentive congregations. This was to me a great assistance as a preparation to enter the active work in the ministry. To the President of the College at that time, Rev. H. J. Clark, and the other professors connected with it, I shall feel myself always under the greatest obligations for their

kindness and Christian fellowship manifested toward me. The time spent there was one of the most pleasant portions of my life, and I hope it was not unprofitably spent.

In the year 1841 I was received on trial in the Pittsburg conference, and by Bishop Roberts immediately transferred to New York conference, to begin the mission in the city of New York among the Germans. A small band of eight brethren and sisters converted in the English Churches cast in their lot with me, and we began in the fear of our God our labors among our countrymen. We met with many obstacles and discouragements, had to contend with prejudices, superstition, and infidelity every-where; but in answer to our prayers, by the help of God, our prospects became brighter, and our little frame meeting-house was soon filled with attentive hearers, souls were awakened and converted to God, and in the course of six months about fifty-seven joined our mission, of whom many were converted to God. At the end of this period brother Lyon, who had before labored among the English, came to our help and took charge of the mission. The want of a church was now greatly felt, and after much inquiry and labor we obtained a suitable lot in Second-street, on which the present church is built.

Having labored sixteen months in the city of New York, I was transferred again by Bishop Waugh to Pittsburg conference, to take charge of the German mission in Pittsburg, which was without a pastor. Owing to different circumstances this mission was brought near the verge of ruin, and the members thereof about to scatter. But they were gathered

again, and we had a precious revival the first winter. Here, also, a house of worship was needed, and in the year 1844 one was built. By Bishop Soule I was ordained deacon in the year 1843, at the conference held in Elizabethtown, Virginia. I labored from January, 1843, to September, 1844, in this mission, was then again transferred to the Ohio conference, ordained in September, 1844, an elder by Bishop Waugh, and by him appointed presiding elder to take charge of the Pittsburg German Mission district, which embraced Pittsburg, Wheeling, Captina, Marietta, Chester, Defiance, Canal Dover, and North Ohio. The amount of traveling on this district was about four thousand miles a year. Other missions were the next year added to it, and it extended from Pittsburg down to Maysville, Kentucky, including nine appointments. On this district I labored four years, and during this time many souls in our quarterly meetings were converted to God. Although years of toil and nearly constant traveling, being separated from family and home months at a time, they were happy years to me.

At the present time I feel yet an earnest desire to devote myself to the service of my God, and to labor for the welfare of my countrymen, of whom hundreds and thousands of them are yearly emigrating to America. In looking back upon the beginning of the German work, and viewing its present extent, I have to exclaim, "The Lord has done great things for us." But viewing the large field spread before us, and much of it already white for the harvest, casting my eyes beyond the deep ocean where lies our native home, and where now also the blossoms of civil and religious liberty are beginning to bud, I can but think

what the Lord has already done for us is only the beginning of a work still greater. May the Lord keep us, his unworthy servants, who are now engaged in this glorious cause, faithful for this our holy calling! Amen.

NOTE.—Brother Doering has been laboring as a missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Germany for a number of years past. He occupies a very important position, and is exerting a favorable influence in spreading Scriptural holiness over the father-land. The above sketch of his experience was written ten years ago, previous to his going to Europe.

## CHAPTER X.

### EXPERIENCE OF G. L. MULFINGER.

I WAS born in Menzenheim, at Wuertzburg, in the kingdom of Bavaria, Germany. My parents belonged to the Lutheran Church. I was consequently brought up and instructed in all the religious ceremonies and usages of this Church; and besides my regular school instruction, my parents took some pains to advance me in some other branches of science. As I had a great fondness for books, it was the wish of my mother that I should become a student—that is, go through the regular course at a university. But as my father could not well spare me, and also lacked the means to support me as a student, after my confirmation I went to work with my father at his business, which was farming and oil-pressing. Religious impressions were strong on my mind in my youth, to which my mother contributed much. She led a pious life, and often admonished me and prayed with me. I was taught to respect and highly to esteem the ministers, especially in view of their power to absolve and to bind, and, as the representatives of Christ, to forgive sins. These doctrines I was taught in a Lutheran catechism. Furthermore, I was taught to believe that baptism was regeneration; but that, as I had not kept my baptismal vow from my childhood, I must renew this vow at my confirmation. The

preacher laid his hands upon my head—according to custom in confirmation—and then, for the first time, I received the true body and blood of Christ in the sacrament—as many Lutherans in Germany still hold these views—as the seal that I was now a true Christian.

As I then heard nothing of the new birth and a change of heart and life, I, alas! with others, stood still at the outward form of religion, and continued to live as much in sin as before, and even more so, because I frequently saw our preacher, in company with others on Sabbath afternoon, sitting by his glass of wine regaling himself, and enjoying the pleasures of this life.

I had a great desire for books, and took delight in reading. I read much in my Bible, through which I was more and more convinced, that in the condition in which I then was, notwithstanding my confirmation and absolution, I was not prepared for heaven. This brought me to deep reflection, and caused me to doubt the truth of the doctrine of our Church in reference to the new birth, baptism, absolution, etc. Finally, I came to the conclusion that either something more must be wrought in us, that we might be better enabled to walk in the way of God's commandments, or that the largest portion of those with whom I was acquainted could not be saved. For in the Bible I had read, "To be carnally-minded is death," and, "He that is born of God doth not commit sin;" and again, I saw by reading Galatians v, 19–21, that the class of persons here described were expressly excluded from the kingdom of heaven. But many of these sins were indulged in by preachers and people.

And now the solemn question would often force itself upon me, Will God fulfill his threatenings and cast off all those who continually violate his law? I did not know that we might be delivered from sin, and, by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, might, through divine grace, be enabled to walk in the way of his commandments. Alas! I had no one to teach me these doctrines. I was tempted to view our heavenly Father as a hard master, "reaping where he had not sown, and gathering where he had not strewed." Such doubts so possessed my mind that, finally, I was filled with enmity against all religion, and regarded the Bible as the invention of priests and kings, who agreed together to oppress the poor that they might live in pleasure.

In 1834 my parents, to my great joy, emigrated to this land of liberty, and settled in Hamilton, Butler county, Ohio, where my mother, who appeared to take great pleasure in the discharge of her religious duties, died—as I trust—in the Lord. Her death again made some impression upon my mind, especially as, only a short time before her departure, she earnestly exhorted me to read my Bible diligently, and to put my confidence in God; and with her last breath she prayed for her children. From the time of her death my mind was often disturbed, and the thought of what should become of me if the Bible were true often made me tremble. I strove to get rid of this impression, by spending what time I could spare from my regular employment in reading such books as said nothing about religion. But still the question would force itself upon me, How will it be should the Bible after all prove to be true? and the solemn response

came every time, "Then you will be lost forever." These thoughts brought such a gloom upon my mind that I often wished I had never been born. After I had lived some time in Cincinnati, Ohio, I went to Lawrenceburg, Indiana. In the years 1837 and '38, my mind became so gloomy that I lost all relish for society and took no interest in the pleasures of youth, and I was regarded by many as singular. My distress of mind was so great that I often thought of laying violent hands upon myself.

I had often heard of the writings of Voltaire and Paine, and expected much from these writers in reference to their arguments against the Bible. In the year 1838 I found an opportunity to read these works. But to my great astonishment, instead of finding solid arguments against the Bible, I only found nothing but scurrilous wit. Instead of finding in the place of the demolished altars of the religion of the Bible a beautiful structure of reason and virtue, I found nothing but gloom and solitude; instead of solid arguments to overthrow the truths of the Bible, I found vain mockings, and saw that a blind hatred against the truth was the main-spring of these writers, and that they had not even themselves studied the Bible. I cast away these works with great disgust; for, instead of being confirmed in my unbelief, as I had expected, I was only the more convinced that the Bible was true. The fabric of my skepticism was shaken to the very foundation, and I felt myself inexpressibly miserable, so that I often spent whole nights without sleeping, and in these melancholy moods would think of the happy days of my childhood, when by the side of my devoted mother I was

taught to offer my prayers to God. But from me I thought all these pleasures had forever fled. I turned my attention to the Scriptures again, but could find nothing but a sentence of condemnation against me. I did not venture to acquaint any one with my condition, for three reasons: first, because I was naturally diffident; secondly, I feared I should be laughed at by my friends; and, thirdly, I did not know any one who I thought would understand my condition. Yet I longed to find some one to whom I might open my heart and who might advise and comfort me. Several times I endeavored to pray, but the enemy would always tell me, "God will not hear you; it is vain for you to pray; thou hast denied the Bible and committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. Christ did not die for you." In this way I spent a whole year, till God in mercy sent brother Nast and brother Adam Miller to Lawrenceburg, in the year 1839, in order there to preach to the neglected Germans the Gospel of Christ. They preached in town every two weeks, and proclaimed the joyful tidings that Christ came to save all who would come unto him without exception. For some time at first I was prevented from attending the preaching, partly on account of my business and partly from my prejudice against the name of Methodist. After some time, through the influence of my brother, at whose house brother Nast and brother Miller frequently staid, I was induced to attend the preaching. I first heard brother Nast, and was convinced under the first sermon that he preached the truth as I had never heard before. On this occasion he gave an invitation to join the Church, and I joined with a

full determination that if there was yet mercy for such a poor sinner as I was, to seek, by the grace of God, till I found it. I began to take courage and to pray for the pardon of my sins, which appeared to lie like mountains upon me. I endeavored to make myself better, but to my astonishment the disquietude of my heart increased, while the enemy of my soul constantly whispered to me, "You have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. You have doubted God's word; there is no mercy for you."

About this time I left Lawrenceburg and moved to Oxford, Butler county, Ohio, with my wife, who, with me, had joined the Church. Here I attended the English Methodist Church regularly, but my diffidence prevented me from attending the class meetings and prayer meetings as it was my duty to do. The natural consequence was that I grew somewhat cold in my desires for salvation.

In 1840 a general revival of religion broke out in Oxford. In several weeks many souls were brought into the liberty of the children of God. I and my wife went regularly to the altar of prayer, but did not find the pearl of great price, and toward the close of the meeting my old temptations returned, especially as one evening while I was kneeling at the altar for prayer, an old brother said to me that he believed I must be a great sinner, because nearly all the seekers had found peace and I was still unconverted. "You have thought correctly," said I to myself; "I am the greatest of all sinners, and it is vain for me to grieve my God any longer by remaining here." I arose and went home sorrowful; and that night my disquietude did not allow me to sleep

any. I feared every moment that I might sink into perdition. Yet I derived some comfort in the reflection that God delighteth not in the death of the sinner. I commenced anew to sigh and pray, and formed the resolution not to give up, but to wrestle like Jacob; and if the Lord condemned me I would go to despair praying, and in hell I would acknowledge his righteous judgment. That night I prayed till the morning of the following day. It was the second of March, 1840, I went into my upper room and fell on my knees before the Lord, with the firm determination not to let him go till he blessed me. When I had remained about two hours on my knees the Lord heard my prayer. I could look up by an eye of faith and see how the blood of Jesus was shed for me. By faith I could hear him say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; go in peace, and sin no more." My load of sin was gone, and the oppressive mountain had been cast by faith "into the sea." Inexpressible joy filled my enraptured soul; all nature seemed to wear a lovely aspect; the trees of the woods seemed to clap their hands for joy. I sunk into the dust and cried with grateful emotions, "Abba, Father." Blessed be God that he willeth not the death of the sinner, but that he return and live. Blessed be God that he has given us this free country, in which men are allowed to proclaim his holy Gospel in its purity, which delivers the sinner from his spiritual bondage. And blessed be God that he has called the Methodist Church into existence, and that he has put it into the heart of our American brethren to preach to the poor rationalistic, unbelieving Germans the Gospel of peace. May the Lord bless

our Methodist brethren for their love to the Germans in time, and reward them in eternity! And may he yet long let the Methodist Church labor, and stand as a city on a hill and as a light in the world, till the last sinner is brought to Christ!

Most remarkable did the holy Scripture appear after my conversion. When I opened the Bible it appeared very strange, that whereas before my conversion all seemed to condemn me, now all appeared to have changed into precious promises; and so it was, for faith in the atoning blood of Christ had changed all into blessings. The word of God was now "a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Much that appeared dark before now appeared clear, and I was astonished at my former darkness. As I had now become a partaker of the liberty of the children of God, so I also wished that my countrymen might become partakers of the same blessings; but as there were no Germans in Oxford I moved to Lawrenceburg again, where a society had been formed, to which my father, brother, and sisters, and, in a word, all my relations belonged. These, with my beloved companion, were soon all converted to God.

I felt at this time a great desire to labor for the cause of God, and to exhort my fellow-men, and the Lord often blessed me in the attempt; however, my natural diffidence soon gained the mastery over me again. The temptation came that it was pride in me to think that God had called such an unworthy and ignorant being to labor in his vineyard; and, on this ground, when brother Kisling, in the year 1841, offered me license to exhort, I refused to take it. I soon felt that the divine presence was in a measure with-

drawn from me. Temptations grew stronger, and my delight in the Lord decreased, so that I soon found myself in a very barren state in spiritual things. The next year I discovered my error, and promised the Lord to obey his call if the door were opened for me. In the fall brother Breunig, preacher in charge, appointed me class-leader. I had many happy hours in this class, which I led two years and a half. At the close of the year 1843 the brethren requested me again to take the office of an exhorter. I received it as from the hand of God, with firm trust that he would sustain me. But here the enemy attacked me on my weak side again. My diffidence to stand up in public and to speak was in my way, and every time I expected to be called on to stand up and exhort, the enemy tempted me so that my whole body began to tremble, and I was often led to think that God would not sustain such an unworthy being as I was; but he has always supported me, and given me liberty to speak when I arose in his name to declare his word. I prayed the Lord to take these temptations from me, and he has heard my prayer and enabled me to rise above them.

In the summer of 1844, after having passed through the usual examination, I was licensed to preach the Gospel. In view of the scarcity of German preachers, the quarterly conference recommended me to the traveling connection, but to me there appeared some insurmountable difficulties in the way. There was, first, my want of experience and qualification for the work. Secondly, my business was such that I could not give it up without great sacrifice to my family; and, withal, my wife was not willing to leave her home

and friends, and I thought too that I might be useful where I was as a local preacher. I prayed to the Lord for direction, and promised to follow the openings of his providence. In this the Lord heard my prayer, and soon two brethren came, of their own accord, and purchased my property, and this left me means to provide a home for my family, in case I should be taken away, or fail in the work from want of health. Accordingly my recommendation was taken to the Ohio conference; and, in the year 1845, I was sent to Fort Wayne, Indiana, to labor there as German missionary. This was a new field, and contained many enemies of Methodism. Fort Wayne is the principal seat of the Puseyite Lutheran Church. When I first came here not one of my German countrymen bade me welcome. Catholics, Lutherans, and Romish priests warned their people against me as a deceiver. I was alone and inexperienced, and a "large valley of dry bones" lay before me. Yet I thanked God in knowing that he was with me. I commenced to preach and to visit the people in their houses, and prayed with them; and, at the end of the year, I had a society of some thirty members, who were earnestly seeking to work out their salvation. A neat brick church was built, which cost twelve hundred dollars, of which eight hundred were paid. The next year I was returned to this field. This was a year of great trials to me; I was sick of the fever eight months; my family was also sick; yet my labor appeared not to be in vain. Several more were converted, and the members grew in grace, and were engaged in working out their salvation. The balance of our church debt, with the exception of two hun-

dred dollars, was paid. Yet, after all, it was a year of great affliction to me and mine. At our last conference, at Columbus, I was sent to Laughery mission, which is a two weeks' circuit, with thirteen appointments, and about one hundred and fifty miles round. Notwithstanding the labor is hard, and the roads are bad, yet, so far, this has been the happiest year of my life. Souls are being awakened from their slumbers, and since conference I have received some twenty into our society. There are three Roman Catholic priests within the bounds of this mission to oppose us. Yet we are constantly gaining ground. The Lord is with us—may he ever remain with us! My motto is onward; and my soul thirsts for the perfect love of God, of which, by times, I have a strong foretaste. While I live, if the Church has any thing for me to do, I expect to spend all my powers of soul and body in the service of my God and the Methodist Episcopal Church, and shall never forget that she was the means of my conversion and the conversion of my friends and relations; and, while I have breath, I shall not cease to labor and pray for her. And from heaven I expect to look down and rejoice over the conversions of generations yet unborn, through her instrumentality.

NOTE.—The above was written by brother Mulfinger ten years ago. He has labored faithfully ever since; a good part of the time as presiding elder, and he is now, 1859, presiding elder of the Burlington district, Rock River conference.

## CHAPTER XI.

### EXPERIENCE OF H. KOENEKE.

I WAS born in Germany, in the kingdom of Hanover, May 28, 1800. My father died in the prime of life, leaving my mother with five children, of which I was the oldest, being nine years of age, and my brother Charles, now German missionary in Illinois, was the youngest, being eleven months old. My mother was a widow twenty years, and endeavored to train us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The impressions that were made on my youthful mind often followed me in my course of sin. In the year 1824 I was married; but at this time I was in a sad condition. I had given myself to drinking and gambling; yet, for the sake of making a living, I full resolved that, as I had taken a wife, I would break off from all these vices. But, alas! I had soon to learn that I was no longer master of myself, and that these contracted habits held a control over me.

What I now learned by experience, I could not previously have believed; for it was a favorite maxim with me, that man was able to govern himself. With my strongest resolutions, however, I was not able to resist sin. I often saw clearly that, unless a change took place, I should not only plunge myself into an untimely grave, but leave my wife and children in a most sorrowful condition. I did not like

to think of death and eternity, for these thoughts usually disturbed my mind. In this vacillating condition, sometimes having pious resolutions, and then again thoughtlessly transgressing, I spent ten years of my married life. During this time my wife shed many a tear; but her principal comfort, probably, consisted in the reflection, that most of the women in the place where we lived were not any better off than she was. The village in which we lived contained about twenty houses, and in it were twelve taverns, all of which had a good run of custom. There was also a Lutheran church, in which worship was held every Sabbath morning, from 10 to 12 o'clock. Many of the members, however, would visit the taverns before going to church, and a majority of the remainder would take their dram at home; so that I can most confidently aver that there were scarcely ever ten men in church who had not been drinking whisky. As soon as worship was over, all kinds of amusements were commenced in the tavern. The dancing-floor was cleared off, music struck up, and an invitation given to dance. The ninepin-alley and card-table were put in a state of readiness. Thus was Sabbath-breaking set in motion, which often continued till late in the night. Sometimes, however, their hilarity was interrupted by quarrelings, contentions, and blows. Many would go home with wounded and bruised heads; and others, robbed of their senses, would stagger to their dwellings.

From such a miserable life God delivered me in 1834. In the night, between the 26th and 27th of December, I had been playing cards from 2 o'clock, P. M., till 12 o'clock at night, and lost considerable

money. On my way home the thought came into my mind, How wrong have I done! All my money is spent, and in the morning I shall much need it. I have an industrious wife and five children at home, and yet I spend every thing in a wrong way. With this thought, it appeared as if God from heaven spoke to my heart, saying, "Also against me hast thou sinned." While these thoughts were passing in my mind I could not move a step. Many of my past sins were brought to remembrance, and my heart was so affected, that in the midnight hour, under the open canopy, I was constrained to cry aloud, while tears flowed from my eyes in greater quantities than they had ever done before. How long this continued I can not tell. I finally went home with a heavy heart, and with a firm resolution to forsake my ungodly companions, and to regulate my life according to the word of God. I had also received so much light, as led me not to depend upon my own strength, but to pray to God that he might aid me to put my good resolutions into practice.

I now believed, in the honesty of my heart, that I ought not to express my feelings to any one in our village, notwithstanding I would gladly have done it had I believed that I could find one among them that was like-minded with myself. This brought me to think, that perhaps the people in T—— and B——, of whose religion and piety so much was said, might be of the same mind as myself, and, consequently, a desire was waked up within me to have some conversation with them. I had often heard that they severely condemned dancing, playing, drunkenness, and such like things. This induced me to believe that I

should agree with them. They lived twenty miles from my place of residence, and had been converted through the instrumentality of Moravian missionaries. These missionaries, however, I at that time did not know, for they were called by different names, as mystics, pietists, etc. I now, for the first time, made known to my wife that I wished to visit the people in T——. She, however, was not satisfied with my purpose; and besides this, she had noticed that, in the few weeks past, I had been industriously reading the Bible, and she was afraid that I should bring as great a reproach upon her and myself as lay upon these people themselves. This threw me into a state of painful anxiety; and I secretly prayed to God that he would teach me the right way; and he so ordered it, that in the course of two or three weeks, a man met me on the street, whom, from his dress, I judged to have come from that place.* I spoke to him, and asked him whether he came from T—— or B——? "From B——," was the answer. I then said, "Please tell me what kind of people those are in your neighborhood, who have all kinds of nicknames, and hold meetings out of the church?" "I am one of them," was the reply, while he looked very friendly at me. I was now, with an anxious heart, much interested in him.

He commenced with an account of conversion, and the new birth, and of the lost condition of the natural man, etc. I then related to him how it had lately been with me; upon which he said that God had awakened me, and that I should seek, through Jesus,

* In Germany, each district has some peculiarity in dress.

for the pardon of my sins. He explained to me, as well as he could, the way of salvation, and exhorted me not to be ashamed of being a follower of Christ, but willingly to take up and bear the cross, and seek out others, and meet with them to read the Bible and engage in prayer. He then left me, and I followed his advice. I often prayed with deep penitential feelings, but always in secret places. I wished to pray publicly in my family, yet a false shame kept me back.

At this period of my repentance my wife noticed that I was really in earnest, and the people soon began to scoff at me. My wife then laid every thing in my way; and when she found she could not accomplish her object, she commenced weeping and lamenting that I had exposed her to so much reproach. She had eleven brothers, and a large number of relatives. For two evenings in succession she was very much enraged. The third evening I had some fearful forebodings, but I continued in prayer to God. On this evening I was indeed put upon the severest trial that I had ever experienced in all my life. She urged me most earnestly to give up my religious course entirely, and told me that if I continued to live in this way she would leave me. After various threatenings, which I can not describe, I finally asked myself, What shall I do? the peace of my family will be certainly destroyed. I sprang up, not being able any longer to endure it. I got my Bible in order to read in it, and as I opened it, I read in the superscription to the 116th Psalm: "Comfort for the afflicted." Then, thought I, with a sorrowful heart and tears in mine eyes, this may be something for me. As I read the first verses I felt as though the Psalm had been writ-

ten expressly for me. When I had read it through, I had such comfort and such a strengthening of my faith, that I resolved with renewed courage to take up my cross, and concluded that the hand of the Almighty could change my situation. I therefore once more prayed to God with a stammering voice. I read the Psalm again, and then retired to rest quietly, my wife having by this time gone to sleep. But I could not sleep the whole night long, being filled with hope and confidence in the almighty power of God; and thus, with watching and prayer, I waited anxiously for the day.

The next morning she would not speak to me. I, however, addressed her as follows: "Beloved wife, I have something to say to you. If I had seven wives opposing me, and if each of them were seven times worse than you are, it would be out of their power to turn me from my purpose, for in my temptation God has strengthened me. Come and see this Psalm." She would not, however, read herself; so I commenced, and she listened with patience. And from that hour I had by the grace of God the victory. My wife was changed, and never persecuted me again. Here I must confess that I was not yet converted; but this was only a degree of preventing grace, which God granted me in my awakening, for I well knew that I should have to experience a greater change. I had no assurance of God's favor, nor the pardon of my sins. Many a day I went from four to eight times in secret, fell upon my knees and prayed to God, and often received some comfort, but still I lacked a living faith. Sometimes, however, I had the assurance that in case I should die in this penitent state, God, for

Christ's sake, would have mercy on me, and take me to heaven.

I now began to look around to see if I could not find some one to unitc with me in seeking salvation. One Sabbath afternoon I went into a house in which I knew there was a woman who was in the habit of reading her Bible. I met some others thcre. We continued meeting from time to time to read the Scripturcs, and Arndt's True Christianity, and also to pray with each other. In a few weeks our number increascd, so that we had from ten to twelve at our meetings, among whom also was my wife.

This was in May, 1834. It was not long till we were visited by the brethren from T—— and B——. We commenced our meetings with singing and prayer. And how astonished we were to hear one of them offer up a powerful prayer from the heart! Such a prayer I had never heard in all my life. I viewed this as the effect of divine grace, and resolved afresh fully to make a surrender of myself to God; and I found, after persevering in prayer, the pardon of my sins in the blood of the Lamb. A living faith was begotten in my heart, and I felt that I could praise the God of my salvation. I now undertook to be the leadcr of this society. The number so increased, that in two years we had thirty persons. We were not only exposed to persecution from the world, but were so circumscribed in our privileges that we could not serve God according to the dictates of our conscience. This awakened in me a strong desire to go to America, as I had often heard much of the religious liberty enjoyed in this country.

I, with my wife, and anothcr family, agreed to start

for America, and we landed safely in Baltimore on the 11th January, 1836. We did not remain there long, but moved to Wheeling, Virginia. I was in high expectation of soon meeting some German American brethren; but, alas! I found myself disappointed. I then visited the Lutheran Church, which had hitherto been my Church; but as I did not find much of the spirit of religion there, I began, with the family above alluded to, and another family, to hold meetings again. Our number increased to twenty-five or thirty. Soon afterward, however, most of them removed to Marietta. Some time after this I heard that the Methodists were going to send out missionaries among the Germans, and that they were about publishing a German religious paper. This was in 1838. I had for some time attended the English Methodist Church in Wheeling, and after due reflection and examination, I was induced to write a letter to Rev. William Nast, who was to be the editor of the paper, with a request that he would use his influence to have a missionary sent to Wheeling.

On the 24th of December of the same year brother John Swahlen came as an agent to Wheeling, to obtain subscribers for the Apologist. We held a meeting the same evening, rejoiced together, and the next day we united with the Church on probation. Brother Swahlen was afterward sent to us as a missionary, and I was appointed class-leader and exhorter. God was with us during the first year, and our society increased to eighty-three members.

I was subsequently licensed to preach, and became a missionary to the Germans. From the Ohio conference, 1843, I was sent to Evansville, Indiana. This

mission was commenced the previous year, by brother Schmucker. I found fifty probationers, of which six were converted. So soon as the Lord made known his power in the awakening of sinners, the enemies of the cross of Christ manifested themselves, and that not in a small degree; for there were many Catholics and rationalists here. However, in spite of all this the work of the Lord prospered. The mission was enlarged, and at nearly every point we had to pray with penitent seekers of religion. By incessant labor and exertions I became so exhausted that I was scarcely able to do the work which was before me, yet the Lord continued to increase our numbers.

The following summer the heat became more excessive than I had been accustomed to, and the climate did not appear to agree with me, and toward the close of August I was taken with the prevailing fever; and, after lying five weeks, I was seized with an attack of cholera morbus. I myself, with all who saw me, did not believe that I could recover. I was so near death that I believe I could not come nearer to my Savior without being admitted into his presence. By faith I laid myself with childlike submission into the will of God, and knew that Jesus was my Savior, and through his grace I was prepared to die. But it pleased my heavenly Father to leave me awhile longer here in his service, and after three months' sickness I could commence again to preach the word of the Lord.

I was returned to this place, and in this year we built a brick church in Evansville and two log churches in the country. I left the mission with a hundred and sixty-seven members, and a third church

in the course of building, with a good prospect for future success.

In 1845 I was transferred to the Illinois conference, and was appointed presiding elder of the St. Louis German district. In the different missions on this district there were eight churches and four hundred and eighty-five members. I found in my first round that I had many difficulties to contend with to find my way through the wilderness and thinly-settled counties. Yet at every quarterly meeting I was permitted to see some fruits of our labors in remarkable awakenings and conversions, of which I will name a few. One was on the St. Charles mission. Here twenty-two joined on probation, among them a man whose wife was very much opposed to him, and censured him most bitterly for the step he had taken. She lamented very much that he had fallen from the faith, as she intended to live and die a Lutheran. The man, however, who had been converted, treated her most kindly, and persuaded her to accompany him to the next quarterly meeting, which was held the 8th of September, 1846. Here the Lord opened her heart, and she felt the need of a Savior. Tears of penitence rolled over her face, and under the prayers of the Church she found peace and comfort to her soul. At the close of this meeting we gave an invitation to those who wished to join our Church. A number came forward and gave us their names, and among them this woman. At this time a remarkable circumstance occurred here. Another man joined us whose wife instantly took the place of the one that had just been converted, and began to persecute her husband. She cried aloud, and left

the house; sat down behind a barn, and continued to ery aloud nearly one hour. She said her husband had fallen from the faith—that she had seen symptoms of this for some time past, for he had of late been constantly at his Bible in secret, and tried to keep it from her. The man replied, "Dear wife, how gladly would I speak with you on these subjects, but you are not willing to hear me." "O, go away," replied she; "we are parted, I ean no longer live with you." While she was in this condition the first-named woman stepped up to her and said, "I pity you from the bottom of my heart, for I was three months in the condition in whieh you now find yourself, but I did not go to sueh extremes as you do; and to-day I thank God that I have been delivered from this sad eondition." As she told of her conversion tears of joy rolled down her faee, and she added, "My eyes are not only opened to see my folly and my ignorance, but also to see the necessity of repentance and conversion, and I now feel that I have a true faith. I only wish heartily that you may not torment yourself so long as I did, and soon experienee that Christ is your Redeemer. So soon as this is the ease you will love the Methodists, and be glad to join them as I have done. You will soon find that your husband is not worse than he was before, but much better. May the Lord soon deliver you from this condition!" and with these words she left her with the remark, "I will pray for you." I exhorted the man to be steadfast, and eommended him to the great Shepherd of his sheep. Several months afterward this woman was converted.

The 6th of July, 1846, I commenced my third

round on the district, and had happy times. I spent two weeks on the Weston mission, administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper at four different places, and baptized thirty-one persons. A number were converted to God, and eighteen joined the Church during this visit.

On the Versailles mission, twenty miles from Booneville, we had a two days' meeting, and, according to custom, we called for penitents to come to the altar of prayer; among those who came were a Roman Catholic woman and girl, who also joined us. As soon as this had occurred, a Catholic man left the house and went and told the father of the girl that his daughter had joined the Methodists. He was much enraged, and concealed himself near the road on which she returned. As she came to the place where he was he rushed from his concealment, laid hold of his daughter and beat her most unmercifully. Though compelled to leave her parental roof, and seek a home with her brother-in-law, she remained a member of our Church. As for the woman, her husband told her that if she dared to go to the Methodist Church again he would take his rifle and shoot her.

In Warren county, Missouri, a young woman, of seventeen years, was driven from her parents' house because she joined our Church. Yet she escaped without beating. However, in the same neighborhood, a man who had found peace with God, and joined us, was beaten dreadfully by his own brother, who was a doctor, saying that he would beat Methodism out of him. In this he, however, did not succeed, for the converted man only became more zealous in the cause

The doctor soon discovered his mistake, and went to his brother to ask his pardon. About this time many rationalists were awakened and converted, besides a number of Roman Catholics. This was a year of prosperity on all these missions, though we had much opposition in various ways. Of this I will relate the following instance: I had made an appointment in a large German settlement. A friend promised to see that I should have the Lutheran church to preach in; but, when the day for preaching arrived, as I was going to the place, I saw in the distance, to my astonishment, a large number of persons collected around the church. In the beginning I thought that curiosity had brought out the people, as I knew there were many rationalists and Catholics in the place, but I soon perceived that there was a dispute and contention among them. The majority were not willing that I should preach in the church, and the disturbance increased, so that there was a great contention, and a prospect of a general fight appeared. I sought to restore order by making signs and beckoning to the people, and in a good measure succeeded in getting their attention, and then addressed them in the following words:

"Dear people, think of what you are doing; I have not come here to take away your church, but to preach to you the word of God, and he who does not wish to hear it has full liberty to stay away. As you have such a contention, and are not willing that I should preach here, I wish to inform you that I will preach in the house of my friend Sandford, half a mile from here, and all who wish to hear me will accompany me to that place."

At once the contention commenced again, but when I left many followed, so that our house was full. I thought, for a moment, that it would be useless to preach to a people that had just been so much excited. Yet I had the comfort to know that if there was a difference in the crowd I had the better part of them. I directed them to sing for some time, that they might become calm. The Lord blessed this meeting in such a manner that tears of contrition flowed from more than a score of eyes. This was not a superficial excitement, for many began to ask what they must do to be saved. After I had taken my dinner and was about to start on my journey, I found a dozen in an adjoining room, who besought me to tarry awhile longer and pray with them, which I cheerfully did. I immediately wrote to the preacher on the Versailles mission to visit this place, and to form a society. This was accordingly done, and there is now here one of the principal appointments on the Jefferson mission.

Soon after this, on 7th of August, 1848, our St. Louis camp meeting commenced, which proved to be a great blessing to many. Thirty-two were converted, and twenty-five joined the Church. Here, also, a remarkable circumstance occurred. A certain woman who had a desire to visit the camp meeting, obtained leave of her husband to accompany one of our brethren, with the promise that he would follow on Sabbath morning. She was awakened under the first sermon, and came to the altar for prayer; and, by continued supplication and faith, she found peace with God. We greeted her joyfully, as a new sister in Christ, while she felt herself baptized with the

Spirit from on high. On Sabbath morning, as her husband came, she approached him joyfully, and declared to him that she had obtained salvation. He became enraged and so angry that he determined not to remain, and declared that she might go where she pleased—he would go and sell his horse and wagon, and break every thing in the house to pieces, and then leave her. He would not be entreated, but went off leaving her with us. The poor woman, sorrowful at what might take place, felt it her duty to return home at the first opportunity, which was on the following night. On Monday morning, as she arrived at home, she found the house locked, and had to enter in through the window. She found every thing in order, but could not find a trace of her husband except his pocket handkerchief, which lay wet on the floor before the bed. With an anxious heart she awaited the arrival of her husband. Her heart began to beat quicker as she heard him approach the door. He unlocked the door, walked in, and in a soft tone said, "Are you here already? You might have remained, and I too would have come again." She noticed that something had produced a great change in him, and asked him what it was. Upon this he could no longer refrain from tears, and confessed that during the past night he had wept over his sins, till his handkerchief was wet with his tears. He then related that after he had gone two miles from the camp meeting, such a feeling came over him that he had to cast himself upon the ground and confess his wrong. He felt that he was a great sinner, and this feeling still pressed him down. An inward joy sprang up in her heart that God had heard her prayers, and she commenced to

pray now more especially for his conversion. He soon obtained peace, and they are now both faithful members of our Church.

At our conference, in the fall of 1846, I received an appointment to a new district, a thousand miles around; on this we had many awakenings and powerful conversions: among others, the following, which occurred in the St. Charles mission: an elder of the Lutheran Church, who had been a great persecutor of our members, and sought in every way to bring the work of God into disrepute, came one day, as by accident, into our church, just as worship was commencing. He concluded to stay and see what the Methodists were doing, so that he might collect something of which to make sport among his comrades; but this was the hour in which his conscience was awakened. The word of God was as a two-edged sword to him, and he left the house deeply smitten in his spirit, yet without being observed by others. As he had three miles to go home, he meditated upon the way on what he had heard, and the Holy Spirit found way to his heart, and he was brought to see himself a great sinner. Scarcely had he reached his house when his distress of mind became so great that he could not well conceal his feelings. In this condition he did not like to appear before his family, and therefore hastened to the stable and fell down on his face and cried aloud for deliverance. His wife and children in the house soon heard the noise, ran out, and knew the voice of the father, thinking that a great misfortune had befallen him. But as soon as they saw him in this condition, they thought he was deranged. The neighbors and especial friends were

immediately sent for, while others came of their own accord, so that, in the course of an hour, the whole yard was full of people. All united in the opinion that he was deranged, as he continued to cry to the Almighty for help, and declared himself as lost. The wisest among them recommended that a doctor, who lived about ten miles off, should be sent for with all speed. As they were preparing to send for him, a brother S. passed by, and saw the great crowd of people, and heard among them a voice of lamentation. He hastened to see what this might mean; but as he remembered seeing this same man before at church, and how attentively he had listened to the sermon, of which all there knew nothing, he at once concluded the man must be under awakening, and as he approached and spoke to the penitent man, he began to cry out, "O, brother S., pray for me; I am lost." The brother now had a blessed work before him, and at the same time, with difficulty, restrained them from sending for the physician. After he had prayed with him for some time, the man sprang up, filled with the love of God and the assurance of the pardon of all his sins, and commenced to praise his Savior aloud. In the course of a few minutes the whole crowd dispersed.

New doors are constantly opening to us, and our meetings are more and more attended. Our camp meetings among the Germans have proved a great blessing to us, as our brethren take much interest in them. Methodism is destined to spread among the Germans of this country, and in less than ten years we hope to extend our labors over Germany.

## CHAPTER XII.

### G. DANKER—C. HELWIG—J H. BAHRENBURG.

#### EXPERIENCE OF G. DANKER.

In the year 1824, when I was about thirty years old, the Lord awakened me from my sleep of sin. I lived in the kingdom of Hanover, about fifteen miles from Bremen, Germany. Nothing was heard about conversion in our country, and consequently nothing was known of converted people. People were satisfied to hear a sermon once in two or three weeks, but this was nothing except a dead morality. Every three months we made confession of past sins, and took the sacrament of the Lord's supper, which we considered would render us free from sin. This was the custom there in the Lutheran Church, to which I belonged.

I was not awakened through the instrumentality of a pious preacher; it was the Lord himself who awakened me. It was a severe penitential struggle, continuing for more than a year, through which I passed. I had no teacher but the word of God, which made me more sorrowful than joyful. I tried to better myself, and prayed earnestly with tears to God for power to do so. I endeavored, in my own strength, to live without sin, and knew nothing of that faith by which we are saved through grace. As I was at Bremen in the summer, there came a young man to me, in the good providence of God, who took

me the next morning to the St. Michael's Church, where I heard a sermon from F. R. Mallett, such as I had not heard in all my life. It was penetrating, spiritual, and full of life. All my self-righteousness was taken from me, and, at the same time, I was directed to Jesus, as the Lamb of God. The same evening, by perseverance in prayer, I obtained the pardon of my sins and peace with God.

After my conversion, when I became more intimately acquainted with the preacher, Frederick R. Mallett, he requested me to hold meetings. Following his good advice, I commenced to preach the word of God to others; but opposition arose, and an officer was sent to disperse our meetings. I was brought before the civil authorities; but this did not result in any thing serious, and we finally obtained liberty to preach when we pleased. The number of those that believed was increased, so that, in a short time, meetings were held in four places.

In the year 1836 I came to America, not with a view to preach, or to say any thing to others about conversion, but from a desire to live piously with my family, and so keep my religion to myself. I settled at Marietta, Ohio; but soon commenced preaching again, and have continued to do so ever since. Sinners were awakened and converted; and although I had the name of Lutheran, my people were called Methodists. About this time the Methodists commenced their work among the Germans in Marietta, where I had my society.

On one occasion I preached in the English Methodist church. Under the sermon some began to cry aloud for mercy; some fell down beside their seats

and began to pray; and this was the first time I ever prayed with penitents in the Church. It caused some disturbance in the Lutheran Church, so that two weeks afterward I withdrew, and delivered my farewell sermon. Rev. C. Best, preacher in charge, and N. Callender, presiding elder, extended the hand of friendship to me; and after seven weeks' serious reflection and prayer, I joined the Methodists, and was received as local preacher in the quarterly conference. Brother Callender appointed me to the Marietta mission, and forty-two of my members went with me to the Methodist Church. This was in the year 1839. In 1840 I was sent to the Monroe mission in Ohio. In 1841 I was ordained deacon, and in 1842 I was ordained elder in the Church. Since my connection with the Methodist Church I have seen many souls converted, among whom are a goodly number who came to this country as Roman Catholics. I thank God that the Methodist Episcopal Church ever sent her missionaries to the Germans. May the blessing of God rest upon the Church for this labor of love, and reward her members in time and in eternity!

### EXPERIENCE OF CHARLES HELWIG.

I was born in the duchy of Nassau, on the 30th of December, 1818, of Protestant parents. My parents were moral in their lives, and I was brought up to strict morality; yet I felt the seeds of corruption within, and the imagination of my heart was evil from youth up. The confirmation, which took place in my fourteenth year, made no especial impression on my mind, because our preacher was an unconverted man. Soon after the confirmation we had a

church dedication feast, which was held every year on the Sabbath day, accompanied with a ball, to which the newly-made Christians also went, danced, and used strong drink.

Fortunately for me and my family, in the year 1834 we emigrated to this happy land, and arrived at Baltimore on the first of January, 1835. In this city my sister was a member of the Zion's Church. The preacher then told the children, by no means to believe that there was a hell into which God would cast the workmanship of his hands. But it pleased the Lord to lead us to his people in the Otterbein* Church. The spiritual worship there soon convinced us of the necessity of a new birth, and our whole family were converted in the winter of 1836. Here I was awakened to a sense of my lost condition. Nothing could satisfy my soul but the blood of my Redeemer; and I made the resolution, like Jacob of old, to wrestle for his blessing. It was granted, and I felt that I was born again, and translated into the joyful kingdom of God's children.

In the year 1837 we moved to Wheeling, where we remained three months. In this place we joined the Methodists, and labored with them. God blessed us abundantly, and in a short time fourteen families were converted. We afterward moved to Marietta, Ohio, where a large society was formed, out of which there are now nine preachers in the vineyard of Christ. I remained here eight years, and often

*This is the old Church of Otterbein, in which the followers of that venerable man have preached since his day. Otterbein assisted at the ordination of Bishop Asbury.

had strong desires to devote myself wholly to the service of God, but thought that if it was his will that I should do so he would open a way for me. Often when I looked at the lost and neglected condition of the Germans of this country my soul was sorrowful. Finally a door was opened for me, and by the advice of brother Schmucker and brother Nast I started out to seek some destitute Germans in the state of Indiana, and went to Madison. I met with many hinderances, but I prayed earnestly to my heavenly Father to show me whether I was in the way of my duty. He answered my prayer in the awakening and conversion of souls. My faith was strengthened, and I removed with a widowed mother and two sisters to Madison. My father had died while we yet lived in Marietta.

I labored night and day for two years and a half as a local preacher, and when I left our society had increased to between forty and fifty. Since then I have had some hard fields to cultivate; yet the Lord has abundantly blessed me. May God make me more useful!

### EXPERIENCE OF J. H. BAHRENBURG.

I was born in the year 1814, in the kingdom of Hanover, of Christian parents, and members of the Lutheran Church. Notwithstanding they at that time knew nothing of a change of heart or the new birth, they lived upright and pious lives, and prayed night and morning in the family. I therefore enjoyed a good training and education, so far as it was in their power to give it to me. As I grew up I was thrown into ungodly society, and heard more swear-

ing than praying. My parents did not allow me to go to the various wicked places of amusement. Yet this did not change my wicked heart, though it preserved me from outbreaking sins. The preacher of our place was a blind guide. He confirmed me, and received me into the Church; but of experimental Christianity he knew nothing.

About this time there was a number of persons powerfully awakened through the Spirit of God in our neighborhood; some were converted, and my father united with them. In their meetings they sung, read, and prayed, and told each other what Jesus had done for their souls. My father then took me with him to those meetings, and I there received such good impressions that I formed the resolution to forsake the world and serve the Lord. Scarcely had I made this noble resolution when persecutions commenced against us. Opposition arose from every side, and the preacher denounced us openly from the pulpit as fools. All this did not deter me, but rather helped me on; and my father admonished me to be steadfast in my purpose, and related to me what he had experienced at those meetings. In this condition I spent about one year praying and weeping between hope and fear. The reason why I had to bear my load of sins so long was, no doubt, this: I was ashamed to bear reproach for the sake of Christ; but finally the wicked cast me off, and now I thought to myself, the ungodly have disowned me, and I am not fit to go with God's people. Yet my desire for Christ and salvation was increased. I often prayed in secret, but all seemed dark before me. Finally, as I believed from the heart that Christ died for me

also, and looked to him by faith for mercy, he pardoned my sins and accepted me. My heart was filled with the love of God—every thing around me appeared new. I could now say in truth, "O, taste and see that the Lord is good!"

I at once felt a strong desire to proclaim to others what the Lord had done for me. I spoke to some of my neighbors, and held some social meetings, and some were awakened and converted. As soon as this work began persecution against us increased. The whole village united to oppress us, and petitioned the authorities of the land to suppress our meetings; but this only increased our zeal. Our number increased, and I continued to hold the meetings some four years. But as we were not allowed the full exercise of our Christian privileges, and heard that there was liberty of conscience in America, our family concluded to go to that country. After a stormy voyage of fifty-three days we landed in Baltimore. From thence my father came to Ohio, and settled in Marietta. I now found myself in a new world, a stranger among strangers. I went to a number of churches, but found no satisfaction, because I did not understand the language. Finally I went to a Methodist prayer meeting. Here I found more than a mere form of godliness. Some shouted aloud for joy, others were crying for mercy, and the power of the Lord was manifested in a way I had never seen before. I prayed to the Lord in my own language, and enjoyed such a sense of the divine presence that I could scarcely express it. The language of my heart was: "This is my people; I am of one spirit with them." I now began to go to their Sunday school to learn their language.

In this way I was soon acquainted with the doctrines and discipline of the Church, and was fully satisfied that they corresponded with the word of God. From this time my call to preach the Gospel to others was stronger, and I commenced to hold meetings among the Germans. In my meetings the Lord blessed us, and a number were awakened and converted. Persecution then arose again on the part of the Lutherans; accordingly, with the converted part of my congregation, I joined the Methodists; which step I have never regretted. In a short time I received license to exhort, and some time afterward license to preach. I then went out and preached, often going on foot thirty or forty miles to the different German settlements. One of these visits I will never forget. I went with brother Koeneke, the German missionary, to Chester and Pomeroy. When we first arrived we could scarcely find a place to preach in, but we finally succeeded, and the first night one soul was converted. We held our meeting four days, and during that time twenty-two joined our Church, the most of whom were converted.

In July, 1842, I was received on trial in the Pittsburg conference, and sent to Captina, Ohio, as German missionary. This was a hard trial for me. My mother said to me, in tears, "My son, remain with us while we live." But I replied, "Whosoever loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." She then bade me go, praying that God's blessing might attend me. I commenced my work with tears and in much weakness; but the Lord helped me, and many souls were awakened and converted to God as seals to my ministry. Since my commencement in

this work I have seen many hardships, and have had to endure much persecution. Churches and school-houses have been closed against me, and I have been persecuted by my countrymen; have had to travel far over rough roads; but I thank God for what he has done for me, and for what my eyes have seen of his work among my countrymen. My daily prayer is that the Lord may keep me faithful.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### EXPERIENCE OF PETER WILKINS.

I WAS born in the kingdom of Hanover, on the 22d of January, 1819, of poor parents, who had to work hard to obtain the necessaries of life for themselves and their children. As members of the Lutheran Church they sought to give us such education as their circumstances allowed, and, at the same time, religious instruction according to the light which they had. This consisted only in outward ceremonies, without making any impression upon the heart. On arriving at the year when it is customary in the Lutheran Church to renew the baptismal vow in confirmation, and to take the sacrament, I was sent to receive the necessary preparatory instruction. At this time I was deeply convinced of my sinful condition and of the necessity of obtaining pardon. I read, from time to time, in the word of God, and was so clearly convinced of my lost condition that I had no rest for my soul.

My instructions did not do me much good; for, instead of being directed to the Savior, we were directed to the ceremonies of the Church, and our spiritual guide knew nothing of the pardon of sins. Yet, in our confirmation, he stood before us, and after hearing our confession pretended to absolve us. I renewed my baptismal vow, received the holy sacrament,

but there was no peace in my soul. As I now had to leave my parental home, in order to earn something for my parents, I became a keeper of sheep in the barrens. My Bible was my constant companion, and the Spirit of God continued to work on my heart. In imagination I can yet go back to the places where I kneeled to pray and plead with the Lord. My devoted disposition excited the enmity of some opposers of religion, and an ungodly physician advised my parents to take the Bible from me lest I should lose my senses. At first they were inclined to follow his counsel; but, upon my earnest entreaty and assurance that they would make me unhappy if they did take from me what was my only source of comfort, they allowed me to retain it.

At this time I received a call to take charge of a small school, which I accepted. It was customary for the teacher to board with the parents of the scholars; and, as I went my round, I came to a very pious man, who prayed in his family, and from whom I received good advice and instruction. But I could not exercise that true faith by which we are saved through grace, and thus I went on four years in doubts and fears. I was inclined to offer myself to the Mission Institute to prepare myself for a mission to heathen lands; but, through the entreaties and opposition of my mother, I abandoned this idea. I had a sister who was sick and very low with consumption, and during her sickness I often talked to her about religion. Three days before her death she was converted. My next purpose was to go to a teachers' institute and prepare myself more fully for a teacher; but here some circumstances made it impossible for me to go.

I was more and more convinced of the deeply-corrupt condition of the learned class of society, and the great opposition which existed against the few that were truly pious, and my heart longed to find a place where I could serve God without restraint. About this time I heard of this free America, and that there were Christians here who worship God in spirit and in truth, and who professed to have experienced the pardon of their sins, and had the witness of the Spirit in their hearts. I now formed the resolution to leave my father-land, and to come to this country, and from henceforth and forever to devote myself to the service of God. On the 9th of June, 1837, I left the scenes of my youth, and my parental home, bade my parents and friends farewell, and departed in the name of the Lord. In eight weeks I reached Baltimore. On my journey from Baltimore to Wheeling, Virginia, I fell among spiritual robbers, and soon caught the spirit of those with whom I associated. I forgot my vows to devote myself to God, and my aim now was to become rich, neglecting to seek for those treasures which neither moth nor rust doth corrupt. Yet my merciful heavenly Father followed me, and my heart was often awakened from its delusion.

I had selected Marietta, Ohio, as my home, where I heard brother Dankcr, then a Lutheran preacher; but he made very little impression upon me. In the commencement of the year 1838 brother Koeneke came to Marietta. He held prayer meetings, and for some time prejudice kept me away; but as I had heard much about these meetings, I finally concluded to go and see for myself. The plain, pointed dis-

course affected me very much; and I, who had gone there out of curiosity, soon surrendered myself as a penitent sinner. All efforts were made by the enemies of godliness to keep me back, and they so far succeeded, through my unwatchfulness, that I not only staid from the meetings, but became myself an enemy and opposer of the work, and thought I was doing God service. One night I heard brother Hartman preach an awakening sermon, and being much offended, thought I would persecute him on his way home. I stood before the church door while he was making his closing prayer; as he prayed especially for his enemies and opposers, his prayer touched my heart. How, thought I, can he pray for his enemies? I went home and sought rest on my bed, but found none. My heart was touched as with an arrow.

I now made the resolution to lead a new life, but the more I strove to amend the worse I appeared to grow. I was now deeply awakened; especially under brother Danker's preaching. One Sunday afternoon, as he preached in the English Methodist Church—he had not then joined the Methodists—he called on me to give out the hymn for him, and I read the one commencing:

"Jesus is the sinner's friend:
O that all the world might hear it!"

A searching sermon on repentance followed, by which I was deeply affected. At the close of the sermon we sang again, and when we came to the last verse I could scarcely repeat the words, and again resolved not to rest till I could say in truth that Jesus had received me.

It was said of brother Danker that he was worse than the Methodists, on account of his powerful discourses. He finally preached his farewell sermon to the Lutherans, and joined the Methodist Church. On the 22d of October, 1838, I prayed for hours in the third story of a mill; yet my faith was too weak, while the enemy was watchful to disturb me. The Methodists had their prayer meeting; yet I did not like to go to them, because I had persecuted them. On the next day, however, I was so distressed that I had to exclaim, "I can not live in this condition, and to die I am unprepared." I heard that brother Danker was to preach, and went to hear him. Before he commenced the services, he said that this was the first time he arose to speak as a Methodist preacher. I was glad to hear this. His sermon was very appropriate to my case, and I thought some one had told him of my condition. After preaching a prayer meeting was held for seekers of salvation, in which I also engaged. The Lord heard our prayers and granted me the pardon of my sins. Never will I forget the evening when God spoke peace to my soul.

I felt from the first day after my conversion that it was my duty to preach the Gospel, but there were many hinderances in my way. Notwithstanding my heart was restless on this subject, I kept myself back and resisted the drawing of the Holy Spirit. In this way I continued for three years, till I had well-nigh lost the evidence of my acceptance with God, and brought darkness upon my soul.

After a severe conflict in my own mind, and much prayer to God that he might open the way for me to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, I became willing to

go; but would not go without the assurance that the Lord would go with me. Now my peace returned again. The Church took up my case, and brought me out without my doing any thing to push myself forward, and in the year 1843 I was recommended to the conference, received on trial, and sent to St. Louis as a missionary. I had many temptations and trials, and several times I was laid low with sickness; yet it has pleased the Lord hitherto to sustain me. My second field of labor was the Beardstown mission, in Illinois. Here I had a long spell of sickness, and was completely prostrated by disease. I returned by permission of my presiding elder, brother Jacoby, to Marietta. I endeavored to resign myself to the leadings of a gracious Providence, and to do what little I could in exhorting and visiting the people. The language of my heart was: I will do all I can, if the Lord will give me strength. The Lord heard my prayer and restored my health, and in the year 1845 I was appointed to the Louisville mission, and here during my two years' labor one hundred and thirteen joined the Church, nearly all of whom, according to their profession, were converted.

I expect to spend my days in this cause. Though poor in this world's wealth, I feel richer than kings and emperors, and hope so to live that, after I have preached to others, I may not myself become a cast-away.

# CHAPTER XIV.

## CHARLES KOENEKE—JOHN A. KLEIN

### EXPERIENCE OF CHARLES KOENEKE.

I CAME to America in the year 1837, and arrived, on the 22d of August, at Wheeling, Virginia, with my wife and two children, where my brother Henry then resided. My object in coming to this country was to seek earthly treasures, in which I hoped to succeed better than in my father-land. My prospects in the commencement were tolerably good, but I did not enjoy myself so well here as in the old country, on account of being deprived of many of the pleasures I had been accustomed to at home.

I lived with my brother, who had been converted to God, and whose Christian life and conversation, and religious services around the family altar, made me still more restless. He often exhorted me to repent of my sins; to which I replied, "God is no more my enemy than he is yours." He often invited me to go with him to their meeting, which I sometimes did, merely to please him. When I heard the preaching I always felt a sense of condemnation; yet I flattered myself that God was merciful, and would finally not deal so strictly with us. But the more I sought in this way to quiet my conscience, the more restless I became. I went one evening to hear preaching, as I thought, but there was a prayer meeting; and the

small congregation prayed earnestly, and became quite lively; finally, a young sister commenced to shout aloud the praises of God. This offended me; yet I trembled like an aspen leaf, and knew not what ailed me. Finally, I concluded that they were all possessed of some bad spirit, and took my hat and left. When I came home my wife asked me why I came home alone. "Ah!" said I, "I have seen strange things this evening. The people are all beside themselves." My wife looked earnestly in my face and said to me, "These people are not beside themselves; but they are good Christians, and we are on the road to hell and everlasting destruction;" and as she said this the tears started from my eyes. These words were as a dagger to my soul. The arrows of the Almighty had pierced my heart, and I stood as if petrified before her. My sin-stained conscience was now fully waked up; I sought to find rest, but found none. I lay under the load of my sins; and, about midnight, I said to my wife, "Let us pray;" and we then made a promise to each other not to cease praying till God had pardoned our sins.

The more I prayed the heavier my burden became; and in this condition I spent some six weeks, till New-Year's night, 1838. This evening, about seven o'clock, I threw myself before the Lord, and prayed earnestly for the pardon of my sins. A number around me were converted, and I still lay a helpless sinner, sometimes tempted to give up; but, finally, I made the resolution that, if I died, I would die at the feet of mercy; and so I prayed till two o'clock in the morning. Then was the happy moment at which the Savior entered into my heart with his peace. Old

things had passed away, and all things had become new. This was the new birth. Immediately a new song was put into my mouth, and I shouted aloud the high praises of God. My wife had received the spirit of adoption one week before this, so that now I could say, I and my house will serve the Lord.

I remained in Wheeling till spring, when we moved to Marietta, Ohio, where, with a number of others, I joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. I soon commenced to lead class, and to exhort the small society. In a short time a preacher was sent to take care of us and preach to us. For about three years I continued to exhort, when I was offered license to preach. To this I made objections, on the ground that I was not competent for so weighty an office; yet I received it, and continued to labor as a local preacher till the summer of 1842, when I was recommended to the Ohio conference. I was received on trial, and sent to the Belleville mission, Illinois. When I had received my appointment I spent the first night with my wife, in prayer, that God might prepare me for so responsible a position; and as soon as possible I arranged my temporal affairs, and committed myself and family into the care of Providence. After a journey of sixteen days, I arrived safe at the house of brother Jacoby, in St. Louis. The kind reception I met with from him encouraged and strengthened me, and in three days afterward I was on my way to my field of labor.

Here I found a large field, like a valley of dry bones. I felt my weakness and incompetency for the great work before me; yet the Lord was with us, and helped me, and a number were converted. When I

now look back and see how the Lord has raised up a people for his name, from so small a commencement, my heart is filled with joy.

From Belleville I was sent to Herman mission, Missouri. Here we had some gracious revivals; and I will only mention one incident, among many, that shows the power of divine grace in the awakening and conversion of sinners. While I was holding a two days' meeting a man in the neighborhood, who had an only daughter whom the father idolized, said to her, "The Methodists have a meeting in our neighborhood to-day; let us go over and see some fun." So he saddled the horses, and off they rode. On the way the father said to his daughter, "We ought to have put on wooden shoes to-day, so that when the Methodists begin to roll around over the benches we might help to make music for them." They arrived, and I commenced preaching. In the afternoon I preached again. The power of the Lord came down, and his daughter, with a number of others, was soon at the altar of prayer, crying for mercy. The father approached to take away his daughter by force; but a brother told him not to do it, and that if he would go to destruction himself, to let his daughter alone to seek her salvation. The daughter was converted that day; and when she arose, she ran to her father and threw her arms around his neck and exclaimed, "Father! father! repent and be converted, or you will be lost forever." The father stood as if paralyzed before her, and was deeply awakened to see his lost condition. Eight days afterward he came twenty miles to hear me preach, and was much distressed on account of his sins; but he, too, obtained pardon.

I have had many a joyful hour in God's service, and I am fully determined to continue in this work. May the Lord keep me faithful, and let me finally obtain an inheritance at his right hand!

EXPERIENCE OF JOHN A. KLEIN.

I was born and brought up in the grand duchy of Baden, Germany, and in 1837, in my fifteenth year, I came with my parents to America, and settled in Sandusky county, Ohio. Through the teaching and customs of our country I was a member of the Lutheran Church. After my confirmation and taking the sacrament of the Lord's supper I considered myself a Christian, and believed I was as good as the most who are made Christians in this way. But today it makes me shudder when I think of the solemn vows we had to make in the presence of a large assembly to renounce the devil and all his works, and declare our purpose to serve God all the days of our lives, loving him with the whole heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. My heart was not much affected, and I was glad when the hour of confirmation was over, but rejoiced that I had passed my catechetical instruction, and was now free from the tyrannical and overbearing teacher who had trained me. I was glad, also, that now, according to the customs of our country, I had liberty to go out into the world, and indulge in all kinds of worldly pleasures and amusements; yet I went to Church at stated times, and took the sacrament of the Lord's supper. My parents told me I was a Christian; but with all this I was daily sinking deeper and deeper in sin, and became very active in the service of my master,

the devil, and was little concerned about the salvation of my soul. When at times my conscience waked up to reprove me I would comfort myself with the reflection that I had been baptized and taken the sacrament. In this way I went with open eyes, instructed by the holy Scriptures, toward destruction, till my eighteenth year.

At this time I lived in Maumee City, Ohio, where the Methodists and Presbyterians held a protracted meeting. I attended the meetings daily, but could not understand much of what was said; yet the power of the Lord accompanied the word preached, and I was awakened to see my lost condition. I went to the altar of prayer with the determination to give God my heart, and in some measure was relieved; but I had no one to teach me in my mother tongue, and the English I did not understand sufficiently to derive much benefit from it. I joined the Methodist Episcopal Church; but now a storm of persecution commenced against me on the part of my parents and other Germans, and they did all in their power to bring me back to my sinful habits. My father took me away to work on the canal, eighteen miles from the city, with the view of getting me away from Methodist associations. Here I was surrounded with the ungodly and profane—heard nothing of God's word, but profanation and blasphemy; and, having myself not as yet a clear evidence of my acceptance with God, I gradually became indifferent, and neglected to pray. Ignorant of the means of grace, and having no encouragement from any pious person, it is no wonder that I yielded to temptation and again mingled with the profane and ungodly crowd. My

conscience often reproved me, but I grew harder and more disposed to indulge in worldly pleasure till I was again wholly given up to the service of the adversary. Indeed, my condition was worse than before; for I became an enemy to all good people, and commenced to persecute and speak against the Methodists. I was once more a zealous Lutheran, and used every opportunity to persecute the Methodists. And in this opposition the Lutheran preacher and his whole congregation joined me.

I now went to Methodist meetings with a view of persecuting the pious, and finding fault, and disturbing them in their devotions. This I did in ignorance and unbelief; but the Spirit of God would at times work powerfully upon my heart, reproving me for my sins, and sometimes it appeared to me that an audible voice spoke to me, and told me I was wrong, and that I should not persecute the people of God. I sometimes felt that if I did not turn from my evil ways I would be lost. But when I asked the question, what must I do? the answer came, you must forsake your wicked associations and be willing to forsake all for Christ and for the glory of his cause. So strong were these impressions at one time, that I thought if I did not then resolve to turn to God I would be ultimately lost. I formed the resolution to repent of my sins, and began earnestly to read God's word and meditate upon its truths. It told me that I must be holy if I would see God in peace. I felt that I was unholy, carnally sold under sin, and unfit for the presence of a holy God and the society of the blessed. I went to a pious Methodist neighbor, two miles from my father's residence, who exhorted

me to pray and seek earnestly for the salvation of my soul, and invited me to come to prayer meeting at his house. This I did, and was then informed that in three weeks there would be a German Methodist preacher there by the name of Riemenschneider. These three weeks was a time of mingled emotions of sorrow and of joy. I was sorry that I had gone so far from my Savior and was an unforgiven sinner, and joyful to think that God in his mercy had again waked me up to see my lost condition, and that there was yet mercy for me. I longed to see the arrival of brother Riemenschneider; and, as I looked for him at the appointed hour, my heart was filled with joy to see him. When he came to the house I extended my hand, and as he took it I felt as though a dagger went through my heart. I said within myself, "O, Lord, let this be the day of my deliverance!" Under the singing, prayer, and preaching I was deeply affected, and felt as though all the exercises were adapted to my case. The word appeared as a hammer to break my heart of stone, and as having a power to kill and make alive. Under the sermon so deeply was I affected that I could not contain myself, but wept and sobbed, and finally cried aloud for mercy. I arose in the congregation while the preacher was yet speaking, and asked the members to pray for me. The whole congregation were in tears, and they all kneeled down and prayed that God might show his mercy to me. Here I lay as a poor, helpless, condemned sinner. The enemy of my soul tempted me to believe that I had sinned away my day of grace, and that there was no mercy for me; and while I thought of this I cried to the Lord, "Is

there no mercy for me? then let me die at the feet of mercy." At this moment I remembered these words, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." If Jesus taketh away the sins of the world, thought I, he will surely take away mine, however great they may be. The Spirit of God still drew me nearer to the cross, and as I thus looked up with confidence to my blessed Savior my load of sins was suddenly rolled from me, and my heart was filled with the divine love. There was now no condemnation. I felt that I was a child of God and an heir of heaven. It appeared to me that heaven had come to my heart, and I arose and praised God for his mercy to me.

This was on the 8th of April, in the year 1843. When I came home my mother said to me, "You look just as if you had got out of prison." I answered, "You have guessed it well, for about two hours ago my Savior delivered me from the bondage of sin, and I am now free." Both of my parents began to persecute me so much that I was compelled to leave home for Christ's sake. Yet, thanks be to God, who hears the prayers of his children, within five months my father and three of my brothers were converted to God, and soon afterward my mother was converted, so that I returned to my father's house and again worked for him.

Not long after my conversion I felt a deep concern for the salvation of my countrymen, and especially when I saw their darkness and ignorance. I felt a strong desire to call sinners to repentance, and was appointed class-leader. This for a short time quieted my mind; but my desire was soon increased to do

more, and to go out and seek those who were going astray from Christ. When I thought how dark and ignorant my own mind had been, I felt an especial desire to do something for them, and was willing to devote my whole life and all my powers of soul and body to this work.

In 1845, two years after my conversion, I was called on to go out and labor in the Lord's vineyard. After close self-examination and prayer I determined to follow the openings of Providence and the call of the Church. In God's name I went, and while laboring in this cause I have seen many souls converted and brought to Christ. The thought of retiring from the regular work of a Methodist preacher makes me sad. May the Lord give me grace still to labor for him!

# CHAPTER XV.

## LEWIS NIPPERT—PHILIP KUHL.

### EXPERIENCE OF LEWIS NIPPERT.

It had never been my intention to write any thing about myself; but, according to the request of Dr. Miller, I will briefly, and as precisely as possible, state a few things of my short history.

I was born the 23d of May, 1825, in Germany. In the year 1830 my parents, with their three children, of which I was the oldest, moved to America, and settled in Belmont county, Ohio, in a German settlement. Here their whole attention was directed to the things of this world, and they appeared to think but little of the salvation of their souls. On the Sabbath, in the forenoon, they went to the Lutheran Church, to which they belonged; and the afternoon was spent in visiting, hunting, or going to the tavern. In these pastimes the minister not unfrequently took part, and with the members of his Church emptied the glass, and often went staggering to his house.

Once a year it was customary to go to the sacrament, with a view there to obtain the pardon of sin and a reconciliation to God. Of true experimental religion there was nothing said, much less possessed. I knew of none among those Germans who lived there that were acquainted with the power of religion. It was "a valley of dry bones." In this condition the

German Methodist preachers found us when, in 1837, they came among us to preach repentance, faith, and conversion. Some were awakened and converted, and joined the Church, and commenced to lead a new life. This waked up the Lutheran Church, and they saw that unless they obtained another preacher, the Methodists would take from them all their people. They dismissed their preacher and called another, who now entered the field with all his might against the Methodists, and warned his people to be on their guard against the false prophets. He often visited my parents, for my father was an elder in his Church, and warned them with all earnestness against the Methodists, as deceivers and enthusiasts, and to go to them would be nothing less than to renounce the faith of their fathers. But his arm was too feeble to stop the work of the Lord. One after another was converted, among whom were some of our relations. These came to my parents and told them what they had experienced in their hearts, and exhorted them also to seek their salvation. But the prejudice of my parents was so great that they did not wish to hear any thing from them.

The Testament—for we had no Bible—and a volume of sermons were now faithfully examined, and every passage that spoke of deceivers and false prophets carefully marked; and when the Methodists came, these passages were shown them, and they were told that they were the persons spoken of; and often half the night was spent in conversations on religion. The more they conversed with Methodists, the more were they convinced and made uneasy. Finally, they were fully convinced of their lost condition, and saw

their dangerous state. Still they were not willing to trust the Methodists fully; however, the Lord directed all to his glory. Brother E. Riemenschneider held a meeting in 1839, one mile from our house, in the evening. My mother attended this meeting. After midnight we all went to bed, though she had not yet returned. About two o'clock she came, and, having awakened us, told us that the Lord had pardoned her sins, that she felt an inexpressible joy in her soul, and that now she firmly believed the Methodists to be the people of God. My father now fell into a deep godly sorrow, and could not rest day nor night. He often went five miles over bad roads to attend the Methodist meeting, and seek the prayers of the Church. Finally, after three months seeking in this way, the Lord had mercy on him and blessed him also.

As I grew up I was very wild, and possessed of a bad disposition. I spent the Sabbath in sinful pleasures, thus laying a dangerous foundation for the future. Had not God delivered me, I might perhaps at this time be in perdition. I drank in the prejudices previously possessed by my parents against the Methodists. The preacher who catechised and instructed us endeavored to fill our minds with prejudice against the Methodists. I hated them from my heart, because I believed they were bad people. I was displeased when my parents were converted, and could not bear to be called a Methodist; and if any of my schoolmates called me by this name, I was immediately ready to fight. I continued to visit the preacher, and was to be confirmed in a short time; but God ordered it otherwise. In 1840, in the fifteenth year of

my age, I was awakened under the preaching of brother Riemenschneider. For two weeks I felt the load of my sins heavy upon me. I wept and prayed, and called upon the Lord in my distress, and often went from eight to ten miles to Church. No weather was too bad, and no difficulties too great. I desired to have peace with God, cost what it would.

Finally, at a meeting where brother Riemenschneider was present, I was enabled to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, to the pardon of my sins. O what joy and happiness I experienced then! It was a glorious hour, of which I hope to have a joyful recollection in eternity.

Having examined and weighed the matter for myself, I joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, which step I have never regretted. Several months after my conversion I went to Cincinnati, where I learned the art of printing, in the office of the Christian Apologist. During my stay there I attended closely to my religious duties, and found my greatest joy in the society of the children of God, and always felt unhappy when I was detained from the house of the Lord. I am under many obligations to the Sunday school, in which I was first a scholar and afterward a teacher. The faithful exhortations of brother Nast made a deep impression on my mind. Also the brethren, Adam Miller and William Ahrens, who had charge of the mission in Cincinnati during my stay there, did not neglect the lambs of the flock. With fear and trembling I took charge of a class in my seventeenth year. It was a heavy cross for me, but the Lord helped me to bear it. When my four years of apprenticeship had passed, I remained some time

in Cincinnati, and then visited my parents, with whom I staid a year. I then returned to Cincinnati, with a view to work at my trade.

I had often felt that it was my duty to devote myself wholly to the work of the Lord. When I arrived at Cincinnati I went to brother Nast, who told me that he believed it was not the will of God that I should be setting these dead letters, but to be sending living epistles into the world, and added, "I believe the Lord will employ you in his vineyard." This was quite unexpected to me, and I began to make some objections. He and brother Doering advised me to return home and await the leadings of Providence. After a severe conflict of mind I followed their advice. The brethren in the Monroe mission gave me license to preach. I continued to see more clearly what was the will of the Lord concerning me, and resolved to give myself wholly to his service. In 1846 I was received into the Ohio conference, and have reason to believe that so far my labor has not been altogether in vain in the Lord. It requires a great deal of sacrifice to be a German missionary; but, by the help and grace of God, I am willing to live and die in this work.

NOTE.—Brother Nippert was sent as a missionary to Germany about eight years ago. He was supported there for several years by the Sabbath school of Morris Chapel charge, in Cincinnati. He has labored faithfully and successfully, and has been the means of leading many of the German children in his native land to the Sabbath school.

### EXPERIENCE OF PHILIP KUHL.

I was born in the village of Bindsachsen, district of Budingen, grand duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, on the

17th of March, 1814. My parents, who were members of the Reformed Church, kept me constantly at school, and brought me up in the fear of God as well as they knew how. I went to different schools till I was sixteen years of age, and during that time lived a retired life. After I had left my parental home I became very wild, and found my happiness in nothing but merry-making and the dance. But with all that I thought myself a good Christian, and firmly believed that if any one would reach heaven I would. On the 25th of May, 1834, I left the father-land with my parents to go to America. Till then I had never heard of a religion of the heart; all the religion of the preachers as well as of the people consisted in some outward formalities of the Christian religion, which appeared fair to the eyes. I became acquainted with only four or five persons in Germany who, as I now believe, had been converted to God. On the first of August we landed at Baltimore, but moved thence to Zanesville, Ohio, where I often went to the German church, but without the least idea that I ought to be converted.

On account of some business I went to Frankfort, Kentucky, and thence first to Louisville and afterward to New Orleans. Here I obtained, in the spring of 1836, a situation as surveyor, in which capacity I assisted in the location of a railroad from Port Hudson to Clinton and Jackson, Louisiana. While I was thus engaged I made much money, but at the same time sank deeper and deeper into the whirlpool of ruin. Alas! if God had not held me back I would have been lost forever. I was very near to absolute infidelity; only those impressions of the truth of the

Christian religion which I had received in childhood I could not get rid of. At last an uneasiness which would not let me stay seized upon my mind, and no amount of money could have prevailed upon me to remain in that society. In August, of the same year, I visited my parents, brothers, and sisters, who, in the mean time, had removed to Beardstown, Illinois, and was providentially hindered from returning to Louisiana. During my stay I went from time to time to hear the German Evangelical ministers preach, and took great pains to find a good congregation; but not one of those preachers told me that I must be converted.

In the spring of 1841 I became neighbor to a watchmaker, by the name of Heminghaus, whom I had always disliked most cordially, and whom by way of contempt, behind his back, I used to call the "Low Dutch saint," because he frequently held prayer and other religious meetings with his wife and three more Germans. I endeavored to find something that might justify the prejudice I cherished against him; yet I experienced from him nothing but that love which one neighbor manifests to another. At last he commenced to visit me. Once on leaving he pulled a book out of his pocket—it was the Evangelical Ordinance of Grace—and requested me to read it. I promised to do so, and went immediately at it. Then it was that God opened my eyes; it was as if scales had fallen from them. I saw clearly that I could not stand thus before God. I began to pray that the Lord would direct and help me to save my soul. All this was done in secret, for I did not want any one to know what was the matter with me. I was resolved

not to rest till I knew that God had pardoned my sins, for I knew of no greater treasure than this. At last, after a conflict that had lasted for weeks, my load grew so heavy that I did not know what to do. I disclosed, therefore, my feelings to my dear wife. She began to weep bitterly, and expressed her confidence that both of us were certainly good enough to get to heaven; at the same time she was afraid that my mind might become disordered. This, however, caused me no uneasiness. All that night I cried and prayed till, when day began to dawn, the thought came up in my mind, "The light of the day has appeared again, but in thy soul there is still the darkness of night." Just then the day-star arose in my heart, the load of sin was taken away, and rest, peace, and joy came into my soul. O, how happy I was!

But the enemy immediately tempted me, and whispered to keep quiet and not tell others of this. For some time he succeeded, and had almost deprived me of my sweet peace. This took place in the first half of November, 1841. On Christmas of the same year I went with my father, who had been awakened, for the first time, to the so-called "Low Dutch meeting." Great was the joy among the five children of God who were assembled there. At the conclusion of the meeting I offered my house—since it contained the most room—for the weekly meetings, where they continued to be held for a number of years. From this time on my peace increased, and also persecutions and conflicts within and without, but the Lord helped me out of them all. Although I understood but very little of the English language, yet I went to the meetings of the English Methodists, where I always

felt happy, and was abundantly blessed. At that time there were but few German Methodists in America. The first German Methodist preacher that ever came to the state of Illinois had just begun a mission in St. Clair county, but this was more than one hundred miles distant from us. In February, 1842, I became a subscriber to the "Christian Apologist," which has been a dear friend to my family ever since, and will remain so as long as I live. By means of this paper I became intimately acquainted with the doctrines and usages of the Methodist Church.

At last, in the month of August, 1842, after we had been reviled most shamefully, both in the pulpit and out of it, the Lord brought it about that the only Methodist preacher in the state paid us a visit, when nine of us—inclusive of my eldest brother and his wife—resolved to unite with the Methodist Church. O, happy resolution, of which I never yet have repented, and I never shall! I used to pray night and day, that the Lord would direct me aright, and preserve me from taking any step which might bring down his displeasure upon me. When I joined the Methodist Church the Lord granted me such strength that nothing could have prevented me from saying, "I will choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." We remained in the English Methodist Church for two years, as there was a great lack of German preachers; but we held our prayer and class meetings in German, brother Heminghaus being our leader.

Till the winter of 1844 I never had any thought of becoming a preacher, although I oftentimes had

felt as though I should like to bring all the world to Christ. It happened some time during this winter that I fell into conversation with a Cumberland Presbyterian preacher by the name of Downing, during which he suddenly said: "Brother Kuhl, I believe it is your duty to preach the Gospel to your German countrymen." I replied: "I can not do this, I am not capable, and I do not know how." He continued: "I have often resolved to tell you that I think it your duty to preach, and never found a favorable opportunity; now, however, I will discharge this duty by telling you that you must do it." These words did not then take hold of my heart. A few moments after this conversation I hastened home to supper, in order to go in the evening and hear that good man preach. The evening preceding this one I commenced reading the biography of a noble German lady, who spent all her life and property in the service of God, but I became sleepy and put the book aside. Having reached home I spent the few moments employed by my wife in setting the table in reading. Being curious to know what followed next after what I had read, I opened the book, and found that it was the question propounded to the lady, "What a preacher should do, if he had to preach and did not know what he should say?" Her answer was: "Let him go to Him who gave words to Balaam's ass, and he will furnish them to a preacher also." It struck me like a thunder-clap that it was my duty to preach. This conviction became stronger and stronger. Brother Jacoby, by a sermon on the text, "Thy kingdom come," poured oil upon the fire which was raging in my breast. O, what anguish

and terror filled my breast, and how often did my cries ascend to God, to give me light and direction in this to me all-important affair!

In the month of June, 1844, I received license to exhort, and in the fall brother Heminghaus was received into conference and sent to Mascoutah. Brother Peter Wilkins was sent to us as the first German preacher, and the work soon began to spread, more souls being converted one after another. In February, 1845, I was granted license to preach, and in May, when brother Wilkins, on account of ill-health, had to return to Ohio, brother Jacoby confided the mission to me. I labored in great feebleness on the Beardstown mission from May to September. During this time eight souls were converted and thirteen united with us. This strengthened my faith very much, and was beneficial for me in later conflicts. By the conference which held its session at Springfield I was sent to the Columbus-Street charge, St. Louis. Through the grace of God it was comparatively an easy task for me to bid farewell to a comfortable home and to flattering prospects for the future; for I had counted the cost very often, and the words, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel," sounded too loud in my ears to be disregarded on any account. But it was very hard for my dear wife to tear herself loose; the Lord, however, granted her strength also, and she too took part in the call of the Lord.

Full of fears and misgivings, but trusting in the Lord, I began my labor in the field to which I had been appointed. It was "full of dead men's bones." Two years full of troubles, conflicts, and cares rolled

round very swiftly; but in them a church was built, ninety-one persons were received into membership, and a hundred souls, among which were many Catholics, were converted. A merciful God had preserved us from domestic cares. My second year in this charge was a succession of the severest inward conflicts. I never either before or afterward had to suffer so much. The enemy seemed determined to thrust me out of the work, even suggesting that it was so exalted and divine that I was not fit for it. But the Lord ever stood by me, and at last commanded the roaring billows to be still. Then there was a great calm, and there is yet a great calm.

The conference of 1847 appointed me to Wash-Street charge, St. Louis. The Lord blessed my labors during these two years by the conversion of more than three hundred souls; during the first year a hundred and ninety, and during the second a hundred and twenty-five united with the Church on probation. The second year, when the cholera was raging fearfully all around us, thirty-eight of my beloved flock were carried off. But God preserved both me and mine, and helped me to remain at my post day and night, with the exception of two or three days, and to point many a dying soul to the Lamb of God. Numbers of them found peace in their last hours.

The conference held at Quincy in 1849, appointed me presiding elder for the St. Louis district. In this capacity I labored there for three years, and the good Lord helped us to achieve great victories. Then the district was divided into the St. Louis and Belleville districts, with two presiding elders. In 1852 I received for my field of labor the Missouri district,

which, during the first year, embraced all the territory from St. Charles up the Missouri river to Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa; during the second year it commenced with Jefferson City. These two years were blessed years for my soul and for the work. About five hundred souls were converted, and the work was extended in all directions.

I was sent to the Quincy district by the conference of 1854. It contained at that time eleven fields of labor and eight hundred members, which increased during the three years of my connection with it to twenty-three fields and seventeen hundred members.

The conference of 1857 divided the Quincy district into the Quincy and Beardstown districts, of which I received the one embracing Beardstown. I have just finished my first year on this district. The Lord has thus far been with us and that to bless, and my soul feels happy in his service. My soul and body, time and gifts, are the Lord's, and I am resolved, by his grace assisting me, to spend my life in his service.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### EXPERIENCE OF JOHN BIER.

I WAS born in the year 1819; was baptized and became a member of the Reformed Church while yet an infant. I was sent to school when I was six years old, and continued to go till I was fifteen. During this time many aspirations after the good filled my tender heart. I formed many excellent resolutions to live for God and his holy religion; but, I am sorry to say, these feelings and resolutions disappeared imperceptibly in the course of time without having been put into execution. The years of schooling and childhood passed quickly by, the day for confirmation approached, and I resolved again most solemnly from the hour of confirmation to live for God and his holy religion. As the young people were accustomed to celebrate the day of their confirmation with dancing, playing, etc., I determined to feign sickness as soon as the ceremony of confirmation was over, in order not to engage with them in those wicked things which the Lord hates. But, alas, what blindness! In the first place, I intended to serve God in my own strength; and, secondly, I determined to tell a lie in order to escape being drawn into that which was sinful. Confirmation was over, and with it every good feeling and resolution left me. With eager steps I made haste to enjoy myself and seek pleas-

ure and happiness in the perishable things of this world. Conscience often smote me; but I did against my better judgment that which displeased God, and hastened toward hell on the rapid stream of vanity.

When seventeen years of age I came with my parents to this country, and settled in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. Here too I lived in youthful levity, although I was still a member of the Reformed Church, till, while walking through the city on a winter evening in the year 1837, I accidentally passed the Methodist meeting-house. Persons of all ages were standing at the windows deriding and laughing at those in the house. Upon my inquiry as to what was going on—for I thought it strange that there should be mocking and derision at such a sacred place—I was told there was a woman in the church who wanted to be married, and a great many of the congregation wanted to marry her, and that they were now quarreling about her. Curiosity led me into the church. I saw there a woman kneeling at the altar, and heard a man praying to God apparently with much ardor and sincerity. "Ah!" said I to myself, "these people must be of God, for they are singing and praying; and those their mockers must be of the devil." The fear of God came upon me, and I again resolved to serve God with my whole heart. I took such liking to these praying persons that, if they had been Germans, I would have joined them on the spot. Nevertheless, I continued as I had been before.

In the year 1838 brother Nast came to Pittsburg, in order to gather a German Methodist society. My parents went to these meetings, and compelled me to go also. I was very much pleased with the religious

exercises, but my heart was so full of the spirit of this world that as soon as I had left the house of God I was found where there was music and dancing. In these places I was generally a looker-on, with a disquieted heart and an upbraiding conscience. I resolved repeatedly never to go again, and kept this resolution for a good while; but at the same time I went not to church. The news at last came that my parents and one of my brothers had united with the Methodist Church. At first I felt indignantly surprised at such a step on their part; but my composure returned when the thought suggested itself to my mind that every one must act for himself. Soon after this I learned that they had been converted. This intelligence caused me much joy. One evening I went with a comrade to the school-house, where brother Nast was preaching; curiosity to know who were there induced me to go in. Among other things, brother Nast said that if every one of his audience had all the sins which he had committed during his lifetime written on his back, so that they could be read by all, with what shame would he not hurry out of the house! "But remember," continued he, "that on the day of final judgment all things will be made manifest," etc. I left the building in deep study over what I had heard. When we had proceeded a considerable distance from the house my comrade remarked, "Listen how that Methodist halloos!" I answered, "Yes." Scarcely had I uttered yes, when I seemed to hear a call from God, "Be converted!" But I resisted God's Spirit. One evening when I was in the midst of a frivolous crowd the Methodists became the topic of conversation.

One said this, another that, against these praying people, all of which was false and unfounded. When I was pointed out as the one who would soon become a Methodist, I replied that, even if all the inhabitants of Pittsburg should turn Methodists I would not become one. We also took counsel together in what dancing saloon we should spend New-Year's night. While we were conversing in this manner prayer was offered up in our behalf unknown to us.

Next morning my dear mother came to me, exhorted me to fear God, showed the necessity of spiritual regeneration, and invited me to come to their meeting. This I promised to do, and went there the same night. I was much interested by the singing, praying, and preaching. At the close the preacher, brother Hartman, invited those who repented of their sins to come forward, kneel down at the altar, and engage in prayer. At once the altar was surrounded with those that were crying to God for mercy. He came to where I was sitting, and, addressing me, said, "Dear young man, do n't you wish to be converted to your God while you are yet young? Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation for you. Come go with me to the altar and consent to be prayed for." He took me by the hand. I followed him and kneeled down. While on my knees, surrounded by floods of penitential tears and fervent prayers, the tempter approached and whispered to me that it would be better for me to slip away through the aisle, unperceived by any one, and leave the house. Nothing but the reflection, what will my parents, what will the preacher think of me if I should do so? prevented me. In the same manner

Satan tempted me twice again, but still more grievously than the first time. But I resisted him. Then the suggestion came into my mind, what will such and such persons say when they learn that I have been kneeling here? At last I resolved, I will remain, come what may; I have to look out for myself; I have a soul to save. I commenced then to pray, "Lord, give me understanding, enlighten me by thy Spirit, convert me, and I shall be converted indeed." I continued in fervent prayer till about eleven o'clock at night. My sins by this time had become an intolerable load; but it seemed as though God would not hear such a sinner as I was. However, I went home praying—laid myself down praying, and literally flooded the bed with bitter tears. I arose very sad next morning. Every thing I looked upon seemed to mourn with me, and I went about bowed down in spirit. A prayer meeting was held at my father's that afternoon, but when I looked at the people the thought came over me, I am the most miserable, not only of those here assembled, but of all men. When the first prayer was offered up the power of God overshadowed me to such a degree that, like Saul, I fell to the ground. The record of my sins was opened before me; all the iniquities of my life passed in review before me; conscience tortured me dreadfully; and yet I had to say yea and amen to all its accusations. "Lord, I have deserved thy displeasure and wrath, but Jesus died for me." Thus I presented Jesus as my surety; but with no pen can I describe how my soul trembled within me and what my poor heart suffered.

After I had wrestled with God in prayer for three

hours, my day of grace began to dawn. I felt the gentle breezes of the Spirit of God in my soul; the voice of the Holy Ghost was heard in my heart, saying, "Son, all thy sins are forgiven thee;" and the love of God was poured in copious streams into my soul. Rejoicing, I could shout and sing. Would that I could describe the joy that I felt when my soul was born again of God! I was sure of the heavenly vision; I knew what had been bestowed upon me by the Lord. All men in the world—nay, even hell itself—could not have made me believe that I had not received pardon for my sins; for the Spirit of God bore witness with my spirit that I was a child of God. I experienced this blessed change of heart on the 29th of December, 1838, at six o'clock at night. When I was called to supper, I felt neither hunger nor thirst. Full of joy I hastened to the evening meeting, and O, blessed night, my soul was perfectly overwhelmed, so that for joy in the Holy Ghost I knew not what to do; I was intoxicated with the rich mercies of heaven. That evening eight souls were delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

The report that I, too, had become a Methodist spread through the city. I commenced then to tell my comrades what the Lord had done for my soul. Some wondered at my words, others derided them, and still others put me in mind of what I had said not long before. A few, however, believed every thing I told them; and, in this manner, it came to pass that those who heard me began to dispute over the words which I addressed to them. The Lord blessed my labors, so that those who before had been engaged

with me in the vanities of this world, now began to serve God with me. I felt an irresistible call to devote myself to the ministry and the work of God; but it seemed to me to be too great and glorious an undertaking. It was for this reason that I told no one of the call of God's Spirit within me. Let me here remark that I had already felt, in early childhood, a great desire and longing to become a missionary, in order to proclaim the Savior of mankind to those who were ignorant of him. Shortly after my conversion I was made class-leader, much against my will. I put in my great youth as a plea, but it availed me nothing. The preacher confided to me a class five miles from the city. I pursued my way thither on foot, praying with a heavy heart, and a soul bowed down with anguish; but, behold, the members of the class received me with open arms of love. I must say it was a heavy cross for me to exhort fathers and mothers; but I commenced in the name of God. Slavish fear disappeared. I began to exhort, to console, and to give advice according to the nature of the confession. We had blessed times, and sinners were awakened and converted to God. A short time afterward I received license to exhort, from brother Swahlen.

I would like to relate in this place a strange occurrence. When I was exhorter our minister called upon me to accompany him on a missionary tour; I consented, and we started upon our journey on foot, in the month of April. It fared pretty hard with me on this my first missionary journey: in the first place, I was not used to travel on foot; secondly, we could get nothing to eat, and hardly a place for lodging;

thirdly, I fell sick; and, fourthly, we got lost in the wilderness. At last, after three days' hard travel, we arrived at the place of our destination. Our countrymen received us kindly. Brother H. preached once, and then left this wild region. I was invited to stay some days, in order to hold prayer meetings, which I did. One very clear moonlight evening we went to the house of our nearest neighbor to hold there a prayer meeting. I distrusted the dilapidated building, and did not like to go in. The people assembled; I read a portion of the word of God by the light of a wood-fire, after which we sang. While we were kneeling around the fire and engaged in prayer, the chimney, which was made of brick, tumbled down, together with one-half of the house. It was a perfect miracle that no one was hurt. The ruins were cleared away, I mounted the heap, commenced to speak, the power of God came down upon us, and a general awakening was the consequence.

Oftentimes the brethren would turn the conversation upon the calling of ministers, in order to learn whether I did not feel an inward call to the ministry. But I disclosed nothing of the desire of my heart; till at last, one evening, brother Callender, with whom I went home after meeting, called upon me to tell him, before God and my own conscience, whether I had not a call from God to go out and preach the Gospel to my German countrymen. He reminded me of the consequences of disobedience and resistance. I felt that I was caught. I therefore opened my heart to him, and he enjoined me to resist no longer, but to follow the gracious guidance of God. Shortly after this I was recommended to the quarterly conference

for license to preach. When the recommendation was read out I began to tremble and shake, and being called upon to withdraw, in order that the brethren might deliberate upon it, I besought the Lord that he would frustrate their design. But this time my prayer remained unheard. Having been called in, the presiding elder, brother M. C. Henderson, informed me that the members of the quarterly conference had resolved to grant me license. Immediately after this calls to take the field, and work for the glory of God and for the salvation of precious immortal souls, came pouring in upon me from all quarters. On the 29th of October I received license, and on the 15th of November, taking leave of my dear ones, I left for Maysville, Kentucky. Here I commenced, with much fear and trembling, the labor which the Lord had laid upon me; but my efforts were blessed by Him, for sinners were awakened and converted. We had to suffer here most violent persecutions, of which I will give only one instance. Lutherans and Catholics had united, in order to stone us Methodists to death. They broke the doors and windows of the building in which we were assembled, and pursued us on our way home with brickbats. One brother was struck so severely on the breast by one of these missiles that he fell down insensible, and was disabled from work for a considerable time. The authors of these outrages were delivered into the hands of justice. But it would require too much room to relate my whole experience. I shall add, very briefly, only a few of the more remarkable conversions.

In Williams county, Ohio, lived a man who was a member of the Catholic Church, and who opposed the

Methodists most violently. I invited him once to come to our meetings; but he refused, saying that he had no time, and that he would not go to a Methodist meeting, even if five hundred oxen were pulling at him. A few days after he came to our love-feast, not *one* ox pulling at him. Several members of our Church, who formerly had been Catholics, related the history of their conversion. His heart was touched, and his eyes ran over with tears. He staid to preaching. During the sermon he felt as if he was in purgatory; after preaching he came to the altar and asked all God's children to pray for him; and, when the services had concluded, he came to me and said: "Brother Bier, if you think me worthy to become a member of the Methodist Church I will give you now my hand and my name, and shall try to give my whole heart to God." He was received, and became a whole-souled Christian.

In Perrysburg, Wood county, Ohio, a Catholic woman was awakened and converted to God. This sister was persecuted very much. But when the priest called at her house to expostulate with her, she told him that she knew the Roman Catholic religion to be false; that she was now a Methodist, and would strive to be a good Christian; that he had better go home then, and keep perfectly quiet. Many more Catholics also were awakened and converted to God, and confessed freely what Jesus had done for their souls.

There was a young man of about twenty-three years of age, in Sandusky City, Ohio, a member of the Lutheran Church, who used to protest most violently that he would not go to a Methodist meeting, and that he would not be converted till the trees in

the forest had turned upside down; that is, struck their tops into the ground and reared their roots aloft. It was not long, however, before the Lord, by his Spirit, commenced the work of grace in his heart; he came to our meetings, and wept and mourned on account of the load of his sins. He was converted and joined our Church, but the trees have yet the same position as in former times.

In the city lived an old man, an elder in the Lutheran Church, whose son, seventeen years of age, was a praying Methodist. For this cause the father drove him from his house. He took leave of parents, brothers, and sisters, with the words, "I will pray for you!" The Lord heard the prayer of the son. On Sunday the father came to our Church, was awakened, and, without being invited, came to the altar, begging the congregation to pray for him as a poor sinner, which request was acceded to on our part most gladly. On the Sunday following the Lutheran minister deprived him of his office, and expelled him from his Church, because he had once only been in the Methodist meeting, and had requested to be prayed for. This course on the part of the minister pleased the old man very much; he took leave of the members of the Lutheran Church and united with ours. Of course his son was now allowed not only to return home, but to go to meeting, to sing and to pray as much as he pleased. The father and the whole family were converted, and determined to love and to serve God.

O, Lord! keep by thy grace all those whom thou by thy Spirit hast called unto a new life, and manifest thy judgments to those that have not yet known them! **Amen.**

# CHAPTER XVII.

## N NUHFER—J H BARTH.

### EXPERIENCE OF NICHOLAS NUHFER.

WHEN I look back upon my past life I can not but exclaim, with the Psalmist: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!" And so I will also offer unto God thanksgiving, and declare his goodness with a joyful heart.

I was born and brought up in the Roman Catholic Church, and early instructed in its principles and its usages. The most that I learned of religion consisted only in knowing how the ceremonies of the Church were to be observed; as how to kneel in presence of the priest, and with what kind of words to address him in our approach to him; how to sprinkle ourselves with holy water when we went into the church, and how to make the sign of the cross; how, during the reading of mass, we were to be especially attentive to the priest in order to fall upon our knees, or rise to our feet, at an intimation from him; and, also, at the proper time to repeat the prescribed forms of prayer; how to conduct ourselves in the confessional, and prostrate ourselves before him; and, what is worse still, to call upon him for absolution from our sins, confessing them in regular order, according to number, name, and kind; and what could be merited by good works, and how these good works could be

transferred to the account of our friends in purgatory; and what especial service the departed saints could render the pious on earth. These are some of the superstitions of the Church. I lived after the customs and forms of the Romish Church, yet not so scrupulously as many others. The reason of this was I was very fond of reading, and I had good opportunities to do so, as my father had a large library; but the Bible, the best of all books, was not there. My desire to read different works induced me, when I visited other families, to take their books and read them, and when I came to a Protestant family and could find a Bible, I always took it and read as long as my time would allow me to do so. In this way I became acquainted with God's word, and was convinced that the religion in which I had been instructed was not Scriptural, and therefore did not observe every thing so punctiliously as I was directed.

After I reached my twentieth year I emigrated to America. When I came here I availed myself of the liberty which this country offered me, and went to the Protestant Church as often as to the Romish. Thus I was more and more convinced of the errors of the Romish Church, and formed the resolution to leave it, and so I lived five years without being a member of any Church, and cared very little about religion. I occasionally heard a sermon, but went away without thinking much about it. But, with gratitude to God, I can say that he followed me by his restraining grace, and I often felt condemnation in my own heart, and often thought seriously on death and a future judgment. But then Satan came with his temptations, telling me that there was no danger,

though I was a sinner and deserved eternal punishment. Yet I had done many good and meritorious deeds; and so withal I comforted myself with the mercy of God. In this way I lived some time.

But, through God's word and the operation of the Holy Spirit, I was convinced that in this condition I would finally be lost, and often formed the resolution to repent. Now hear, dear reader, what I understood by repentance: I believed that the only thing necessary was to quit sinning and commence to live better. Of evangelical repentance, which includes a true sorrow for sin, I knew nothing. Much less could I have a proper conception of a true faith, which apprehends the merits of Christ and appropriates it to the penitent soul, and still less of the great change that passes upon the sinner when he is delivered from the bondage of sin, and has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost sent to him. In a word, I did not know what it was to be born again. As no one can keep God's commandments, and lead a holy life by his own resolutions and in his own strength, so I could not, by constant effort, lead a better life than I had led for some time past. Yet, instead of making myself better, I became worse, and was making rapid strides toward destruction. I soon should have fallen into a worse condition if my merciful heavenly Father had not come to my rescue. This he did; for, in the year 1842, brother Riemenschneider came into my neighborhood and gave out an appointment to preach. He was the first German Methodist preacher that came into that vicinity. I went to hear him, and, in truth, I must confess that his first sermon made a deeper impression on my mind

than any I had ever heard. After the third sermon I was fully convinced of my lost condition, and saw that in order to be saved it was not only necessary to commence a new life, but that the sinner must obtain pardon before he can be received into the fellowship of the blessed and holy; and to obtain this the preacher pointed me to the Savior of sinners—Jesus Christ.

I began to pray in secret, but for some days I feared to pray in public. Now learn, dear reader, how I was induced to commence praying in public. One day my old mother came to me, and as she saw me she commenced to weep, and said to me, "Alas! what is this that I hear of you?" "What, then?" I asked. "Why, your brother-in-law and your sister are going to turn Methodists, and they say you are going too." I answered, "On this account you need not weep; I am going to repent and turn to God, and so will my brother-in-law and my sister." Hereupon she replied, "I have heard that you intend to become Methodists." "Yes," said I, "this may become true." On this she wept more, and exclaimed in great distress, "O, God, what shall I do? O, Jesus, O, Mary, O, Joseph! what must I, an old woman, yet live to see in my children? Alas! I have brought up lambs, and now they all turn into wolves." I tried to talk to her, and to explain to her the necessity of repentance and conversion, but she interrupted me, and told me that I must go to the priests, and to make confession and obtain absolution if I wished to amend my ways, and that I must not leave the Romish Church. This, I told her, I had already done. She replied, "Yes, and you have thus committed a mortal

sin." In the mean time my wife prepared dinner; and, as we sat down to it, my mother said in a taunting way, thinking to embarrass or annoy me, "Well, if you are determined to be a Methodist you will have to pray before you eat, for the Methodists are such pious people they eat not without first praying; so you shall now also pray before you can eat." I replied, "Well, I will do this also." And this was the first time I ever asked a blessing at my table. Before we went to bed she commenced in the same way, thinking, no doubt, to break me down, and said, "The Methodists pray night and morning in the family." I answered, "And I will do it too." And this was my first family prayer. From that time out I never neglected to ask a blessing at my table or to pray in my family.

About this time there were a number of others in our neighborhood who commenced seeking the Lord, and I took one step after the other in the way of life, and we all united in public prayer meetings, and thus I commenced publicly to call upon God for mercy. Now see in my case the fulfillment of the apostle's words: "All things shall work together for good to them that love God," or seek to follow him. My mother sought to keep me from the Savior by mocking and provoking me, but by this means I was driven nearer to the Savior. Perhaps it might have been some time before I could get along so far as to pray in my family if my mother had not driven me to it with her sneers and mockings. Before I proceed with my narrative I will only remark that my mother was herself soon after converted to God.

From the time when I commenced earnestly to seek

for mercy I had to contend three weeks against unbelief and the enemy of my soul. For when the enemy saw that he could do nothing by comforting me with the suggestion that I need not fear, that I was not as great a sinner as many others, and that I was in no danger, he began to attack me from another direction, and said to me, "You need not look for the pardon of your sins; your heart is not sufficiently broken up like the hearts of other penitents. See how they can weep while your heart is still hard." And then he suggested again: "It is now too late; had you commenced immediately when you discovered the errors of the Romish Church you might have obtained mercy, but not now." Against these assaults I constantly turned to God's word, leaning upon the promises there recorded to poor sinners, such as, "I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner; turn ye and live; as I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but that he turn and live." These, with many other similar promises, both in the Old and New Testament, encouraged me.

But one morning I was severely tried. As I had prayed in my family and went to my work, the tempter came and led me into great darkness; so that I almost despaired of ever having my prayers answered. Unbelief pressed sore upon me, because I had to seek so long and found no rest for my soul. A voice seemed to whisper in my ear, "You can not come in any other way than you have come; and why has his mercy delayed so long? You are sorry for your sins, and hate them with an intense hatred. You have cast away all self-righteousness, and are

depending alone for mercy on the atonement of Christ. You believe all the good promises of God's word, and still you have not the peace of God in your heart. It is not worth while to proceed any further." How sad did I then feel—eternally lost and no mercy for me! My heart was ready to break with anguish at the thought of being forever lost. The world appeared to me like the valley of death. "O, wretched man," I exclaimed, "who can help me?" I once more fell on my knees and wept and prayed, and again resolved not to stop seeking till I found mercy at the hand of God. At that moment Jesus manifested himself to my soul, and the word of comfort was spoken to me: "Be of good cheer: thy sins are all forgiven." Love for my Savior filled my heart, and gladly would I then have departed to be with him. This was in April, 1842.

Soon after this brother Riemenschneider gave an opportunity to join the Church. I was among the first that went forward to join, and in a short time I was appointed class-leader. In this office I continued four years, though I constantly felt myself urged to preach the Gospel. But I was not willing to yield to this impression, for the cross appeared too heavy for me; neither did I open my mind on this subject to any one, and I sometimes feared that I was deceived. But as I could not get rid of this impression I prayed earnestly to God that I might give myself up unto him; that if it was his will I should preach his word the way might be opened for me without any effort on my part. This was done, and I have been permitted to see many of my countrymen come from darkness to his glorious light. May the

Lord yet lead many thousands from the error of their ways to a knowledge of his grace! I have had many a conflict since I started in this good work, but to the glory of God's grace I can say that he has hitherto sustained me, and I believe he will be with me to the end.

### EXPERIENCE OF J. H. BARTH.

In the year 1821, on the 11th of March, I was born in Hesse-Darmstadt. In my fourth year my mother was taken from me by death. In my early youth I felt something of the love of God, through the religious instruction of my father. In 1831 my father emigrated to America, with the view of freeing his five sons, of which I was the youngest, from the military conscription of Germany, and in this happy country to secure to them an abundance of earthly treasures. By our emigration I lost my good impressions, notwithstanding good instructions were continued to me.

My father settled in Bedford, Pennsylvania, where we remained five years. During this time I went regularly to the English Sabbath school, and here I obtained the greater part of my knowledge of English. While I read the Sabbath school books, and especially those which gave an account of the lives of good persons, I again had a strong desire to be pious; but, alas! I never took a start in the good way. This was owing to a want of family prayer and proper family influence, which I consider one of the best means to lead the youth in the way to life. My father prayed in secret, but not publicly in the family.

In the course of five years my father moved to Indiana, to secure to himself a home. We had intended

to go to Indianapolis, but, on account of the impassable condition of the roads, stopped at a place called Brandywine. Although we had only designed to wait for the improvement of the roads to enable us to proceed on our journey, my father concluded to settle here. Accordingly he purchased property, and we made arrangements for living on our land.

A Methodist preacher, by the name of Morgan, soon visited us, and there were none but Methodist preachers in this country. The summer passed away; and in the fall we were all prostrated by the fever common to that country. My father lay ill six weeks with the fever, and then died in the full triumphs of faith. During the whole time of his sickness he prayed earnestly; and every morning when we awoke we could see him on his knees before his bed.

A short time before his death he called us to his bedside and told us he had found peace with God, and commended us to our heavenly Father, saying that God would surely take care of us; pronounced upon us his parental blessing, and departed in great peace.

After his death we removed to Louisville, Kentucky, where my two older brothers lived. Here I went through my catechetical instruction, and was prepared for confirmation. In my confirmation I was deeply affected, and had I then had some one to point me to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, I might have been converted; but I went from the house with the delusive impression that the act of confirmation made me a Christian. My good impressions gradually left me, and I became careless and thoughtless about the salvation of my soul; fond of going to theaters and places of amusement; yet

all the time the voice of conscience cried within, There is a God who will judge you for all you do. When I thought of death, judgment, and eternity, I was greatly alarmed; and amid the giddy scenes of the ball-room and theater I was often deeply affected. I sought to drown these serious impressions in the wine-cup, and frequented many places of amusement. The thoughts of resigning my body to the grave were all dreadful to me. O, what a wretched condition to live without God and without hope in the world!

Finally, the report came that there was a German missionary in the city. I had often heard of missionaries, but had never seen one, and my curiosity to hear him was excited. It was the venerable Peter Schmucker, and he preached in the Eighth-street Methodist Church. When we went to Church, the English service was not quite out. At its close the old man, in a winning voice, invited us to stay for German preaching. O, thought I, what kind-hearted men missionaries are! His whole manner indicated that he was a man of God. He took his stand in the altar, and gave out a hymn. I took a hearty part in the singing, and then the preacher kneeled down to pray; I was not ashamed to kneel down too, as I had learned this in Sabbath school. He then took as his text these words, "Thy kingdom come," and commenced to preach. His sermon was plain and powerful, and deeply affected me. I looked and listened with astonishment, and wondered how a stranger could be so well acquainted with the workings and feelings of my heart; and then, for the first time, saw how sin had deformed my moral nature. I went

home with a heavy heart, yet glad to have made the acquaintance of so good a man as father Schmucker.

After some time had elapsed, and I thought the old man was on his way to some heathen land—for I thought that missionaries were only sent to heathen lands—I went one day into a coffee-house to drink, and the bar-keeper showed me a paper containing a slanderous article against the Methodist German missionary. I read it, and became indignant, and told him it was a lie, and that if the old man was still in the city I would go and hear him again. On the following Sabbath I was early on my way to the church. In the afternoon they had a class meeting, and all serious persons were kindly invited to attend. I went, and with great curiosity I waited to see what would take place. Finally, after prayer, one arose and went from one to another, giving them advice and encouragement, and when he came to me I was so affected that I could hardly get out the words, "I am a poor sinner." At the close of this meeting father Schmucker invited all who wished to forsake their ungodly ways, and to lead a new life, to come forward and give him their hand, and God their hearts. I thought of my broken vows and my past wicked life, and thought it was my duty to go forward, which I immediately did. Soon after this some one handed me a tract on the future judgment, and this so awakened me to a sense of my lost condition that I thought the wrath of God was suspended over me, and that the earth was ready to swallow me up for my ungodly life. I went to supper in the evening, but could scarcely eat for tears. I told my condition to my brother, who said, You must not delay, but we

will go to brother Schmucker and make known your condition. We came at the right time, for he was just holding a prayer meeting, and told all the seekers of salvation to remain on their knees, while the rest sang and prayed. I obtained no peace, but a deeper sense of my depravity. Often I lay on the ground in the night, and prayed to God for mercy; and in the mean time I was taken very sick, so that all who saw me thought I could not recover. I had no fear of death, yet, at the same time, had not a satisfactory assurance of my acceptance with God.

After my recovery there was a protracted meeting held in the city, where brothers Jacoby and Kisling helped brother Schmucker. There was an invitation given for seekers of salvation to kneel at the altar, while the Church united in prayer for them. I at first was tempted not to go, but upon a second thought I concluded to go. My convictions were deepened, and from time to time I continued to go. I mourned because I had grieved the Savior; but when I looked to him, my darkness passed away, and all around me was light. I felt that heaven was upon earth, and when I went out into the city all things appeared new; for the first time I understood the words of the apostle, "Old things are passed away and all things are become new."

After I had fully recovered my health my associations were such that I had a good opportunity to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Savior. I was soon appointed class-leader, and after some time was licensed to exhort. I held meetings in the country, and to my astonishment large crowds came out to hear me talk to them. My impression was strong

that I should do something more than work at the trade which I was learning. In two years I received license to preach; and six months afterward was received into the regular work in the Kentucky conference, and from there transferred to the Ohio conference, where I have since labored as a missionary among the Germans.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### WM. SCHRECK—JOHN PLANK—CASPER JOST

#### EXPERIENCE OF WILLIAM SCHRECK.

I WAS born on the 19th of July, 1815, in the province of Westphalia, Prussia. I was instructed by a pious preacher in the Heidelberg catechism, and was early awakened to see myself a sinner, and that I must be converted. In this condition I remained for some five years, but could never feel or assume that I had obtained the pardon of my sins.

When I was twenty-one years old I came with my father and brother to America. We landed in Baltimore, and settled in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania.

Here I at first felt like a lost sheep without fold or shepherd. I had read in Germany something of the Methodists in some missionary reports, and that they had done much among the heathen. This made a good impression on my mind. I also learned from the papers that there were Methodists in the United States. Soon after I arrived here I inquired about them, but the Germans where I lived said many things against them. I soon found that it was persecution, and these reports did not diminish my confidence in them. I sought a home in a Methodist family; and though I could understand English but little, I was rejoiced to engage with them in family

worship. They also invited me to go along with them to the church. Here I did not understand much except the name of Jesus, which sounds in English nearly like the German. I often prayed to the Lord that I might learn the English language soon, so that I might be profited by the preaching; and I soon made rapid progress, and in a short time could understand nearly every thing that was said in English.

There was a camp meeting held by the English Methodists near my residence. It commenced on the 17th of September, 1838. Two weeks before this camp meeting the Spirit of God wrought powerfully upon my heart, so that by times I could neither eat nor sleep. In this condition I concluded to write to my old teacher in Germany, and open the condition of my heart to him, but thought I would wait till after camp meeting. On Sunday morning at eleven o'clock I came to the camp-ground, where there were thousands of people assembled, and the scene of a camp meeting excited much astonishment in me. The sermon which I heard deeply affected me. The preacher spoke in a plain and distinct manner, and I could understand him better than I could the rest. On Monday morning brother Wesley Browning, who was then stationed in Pittsburg, preached from 1 Corinthians xi, 29. This sermon was an especial blessing for me, and suited me as well as if some one had told him my condition. The word was accompanied with power to my heart. I was so affected that I retired to weep and pray.

In the evening I left the camp-ground and went six miles off. After it was dark, when I was passing along the Monongahela river I began to sing, and now

the sermon of brother Browning came fresh to my mind, and it appeared to me that I could see the corruption of my heart, and the depth of my moral pollution. I sang a hymn, and was seized with a strange trembling. Tears streamed from my eyes; I kneeled down to pray, and then arose and went still further, and kneeled down again; and as I imagined myself in sight of the cross, I exclaimed with the man in the Gospel: "Lord, I believe: help thou my unbelief." No sooner were these words out of my mouth than I felt that power from on high came down upon my heart.

I had now no occasion to write for instruction to my old teacher. The love of God was shed abroad in my heart through the Holy Ghost given unto me. After this I felt inwardly moved to tell others what the Lord had done for me. I opened my mind to brother Browning, whom I regarded as my father in the Gospel. I told him I thought I was called to go to heathen lands to preach the Gospel. Brother Browning told me to follow the indications of Providence and go where the way was opened for me. He also told me that the Methodist Church was about to send missionaries to the Germans of this country, and if it was the Lord's will I could labor among them.

In the spring of 1839 I left Pennsylvania and removed to the state of Indiana, and resided over three years in Richmond, Wayne county. I attended the Methodist meetings, but did not unite with the Church because I could not speak English well enough to visit the class meetings. Finally, by a good Providence, brother John Kisling, a German missionary, was sent to visit us in Richmond. He preached there

for some time, and I joined the Church under his encouragement and instruction. I commenced to preach to the Germans the word of the Lord, and I was blessed in the attempt. I have since spent many happy days and seen many souls converted to God. May his grace be with me to the end!

### EXPERIENCE OF JOHN PLANK.

I was born on the 15th of August, 1807, in Zwingenburg, Hesse-Darmstadt. In my fifth year I was sent to school, and in my fourteenth year I was confirmed. I had been so attentive to my catechetical instructions that I could repeat the articles of faith from memory, but had derived no benefit from them to my heart. I then went for the first time to the table of the Lord, and believed myself a good Christian. In this false hope I lived till my thirtieth year. For nearly fifteen years I never looked into the Bible, and was entirely controlled by a carnal mind. I was a stranger to God, and never called his name except when cursing and swearing.

In the year 1829, on the 2d of August, I came to America; and as I lived mostly in newly-settled countries I did not attend Church. When I began to understand English, I heard of the Methodists, but I heard only slanderous reports concerning them from the enemies of the Church. Yet I believed these reports, and was filled with opposition to Methodism. Notwithstanding I had gone on in my blindness, and depended upon baptism and confirmation, yet it pleased the Lord to show me a better way. As his love had not moved my stubborn heart, he took his chastening rod, and I was confined to a sick-bed for

nine months. I was so ill that my physician one day expected me to die; but the next day he pronounced me better, and told me that when he had left me the previous day he had no thought of seeing me alive again. When he had gone I began to think over my condition, and asked myself, if I had died, where I should now be? I sought for the first time to examine myself, and the more I did so the more I saw my unfitness for heaven. I now made a solemn covenant with God, that if he would spare my life I would serve him better than I had done.

Of conversion I knew nothing, and my idea of a Christian was gradually to lay aside one sin after another; but, alas! as I gained in bodily strength so I also gradually forgot to keep my promises.

About this time I removed to the northern part of Missouri, and had pretty much fallen into my old habits. Here it pleased the Lord to remind me of my covenant by confining me again to a bed of sickness for six months. My hard heart now melted into tenderness, and a struggle commenced. The Spirit of God on one side drew me to the Savior, and the enemy of my soul on the other hand was not willing to give me up. Scarcely had I formed the purpose to renew my vows to serve God before the enemy told me: "You have lied unto him once, and now if you promise again he will not hear you." After a long and severe conflict in my mind, I ventured again to call upon God. Not long after this I heard that there was to be preaching in the neighborhood, the first sermon that had ever been preached here by a German Methodist preacher. I formed the resolution to go, and thought if he could tell me what I must do

to be saved, I would gladly receive the truth. Every word appeared to suit my case; my heart melted like wax before the flame. After the sermon he gave an invitation to all such as wished to join on probation and put themselves under the watch-care of the Church. I was the first one that went forward and gave him my hand, when seven others followed, among whom was also my wife. And now the conflict commenced once more between Satan and my soul, and if the Lord had not sustained me by an invisible hand, the enemy would have obtained an easy victory over me. Now I first began to learn that I must be converted. I began to pray in secret, but the more I prayed the more I saw my miserable condition, and came to the conclusion that instead of becoming free from sins I was growing worse. Satan tempted me by suggesting to my mind the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, and told me I was one of the reprobates and would be lost do what I might, and so I discontinued to pray for three days. During these three days I was greatly tempted to use profane language, but when I went to class meeting, I heard a brother tell what temptations he had passed through, which were similar to mine. As I heard him tell his trials I formed the firm resolution to begin to pray again, and not to stop praying, and if I should be sent to hell I would go crying for mercy.

I prayed earnestly and repeatedly, and depended too much on my prayers, instead of looking to Christ and depending on his merits. One Sunday in May, 1841, as I was alone in my house reading the Bible and thinking on the precious promises it contains, I said to myself, How is it that I can not believe these

promises? I laid the Bible on my chair, kneeled down and prayed the Lord to give me faith. I arose and took my Bible and began to read again. My eyes were filled with tears, but my heart was full of joy. I could cry out, "Praised be the Lord," for I felt that my burden was taken from me. But the tempter soon came and told me I was not converted, because I did not feel like shouting aloud as many had done, and so I went on doubting till a camp meeting was held some thirty miles from my residence. I went with the resolution not to return home till God should deliver me from my doubts; and I thank God that he did deliver me in a love-feast on the 14th of August, 1841. So clear was my evidence that I have never doubted it, and this day I regard as the day of my spiritual birth.

Soon after this I felt a deep concern for the salvation of my fellow-men, and a voice within me said that I must call upon them to repent. But I did not wish to harbor this thought, and believed that the enemy was tempting me to presumption, and that a man who preached must have passed through a regular course of education for the ministry. Still I had no rest; and as I went on in this way for one year with these feelings of anxiety for the salvation of others, I finally opened my mind to a local preacher. He told me not to think that Satan tempted any one to preach the Gospel, and before I was aware of it this matter came to the ears of the circuit preacher, who exhorted me not to resist the Spirit of God. I received license to exhort, and soon endeavored to look after some of my German neighbors, and made an appointment to hold meeting among them. I

prayed earnestly to the Lord to open my way and give me to know my duty. At my first appointment the Lord stood by me in a remarkable manner. While I talked to the people they were all melted to tears, and soon some of them joined the Church. I was recommended to the quarterly conference, and received license to preach on the 11th of February, 1843. I commenced to preach, and not without some fruit. In 1846 I was recommended to the annual conference, and was sent to Bloomington mission, where the Lord blessed my labors. I have seen many brought home to the fold of Christ, and am still willing to lay my all upon the altar of the Lord.

EXPERIENCE OF CASPER JOST.

In August, 1840, I came, a student of law and a Roman Catholic unbeliever, to this country, not knowing the difference between a Testament and a Bible. In Cole county, Missouri, I settled, and went occasionally to the Protestant meetings; for I had been informed by history of the great evil the Roman Church has done in the world. I lived till then but little concerned about religion. Meantime a Roman priest came into the settlement, and I truly desired to become religious. I went to the priest and confessed, but not being conscious of any mortal sin, according to Romish doctrine, I did not tell him any sin. After some trifling remarks of the priest, however, I obtained absolution, and partook of the sacrament—having said about half a dozen paternosters and ave-marys for penance, though without being any better. I still visited the Protestant, especially the Baptist meetings, and examined and searched all the books

about religion in my reach. One work, especially, "Thoughts on Popery," was of good service to me, and I became clearly convinced of the errors of Romanism. A great desire at the same time I felt for truth. Many prayers attended those desires, and a peace of soul often followed, which, perhaps, I never had experienced before.

Nothing but Scripture would prove any thing satisfactorily to my mind. The behavior of the priest at his next visit, together with many other things, led me to the resolution to renounce Romanism, and, being much in favor of baptism by immersion, to join the Baptists. At this time, in the spring of 1843, I went to live in Jefferson City. There I went to the Baptist Church, and at a certain meeting, several preachers being present, invitation to mourners was given, and I, a poor sinner and a stranger to all, came forward to be prayed for. But only think of my utter surprise when I found out that I had got among the Methodists, who all this time preached in the Baptist meeting-house, having none of their own, and the Baptists having no preacher. I resolved to go no more; but a little while after I found myself seated in my old place, being led there by a secret power. I asked for the Articles of Faith and Church Discipline, obtained and examined them, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in the city, then under the pastoral care of Rev. Thomas W. Chandler, now of the Southern Illinois conference.

Soon after this I got into wicked company, and one night went to a drinking and dancing party. After I retired to rest, lo, there was no rest for me. Conviction and sorrow fell upon me, and I suffered

the pains of hell and of a guilty conscience. I rolled and cried for deliverance, for rest, for sleep, and for peace with the firmest promise to almighty God never to sin again. I shall never forget it. After this I tried to serve God, and fell, without knowing it, in a self-righteous way, my religion consisting only in attendance on the means of grace, in the form of godliness without the power. By this time, in the fall of 1843, my wife, a Protestant, but not a professor, after a severe sickness, was called hence. Eternity then seemed to be opened before my feet. There was but one step between me and the dead. "Lord," I cried, "save, or I perish." I then believed in the all-atoning blood, and the love of God was poured into my heart. Truly all things had become new to me. O, thought I, how can any one neglect so great a salvation as this? What a burning love I had for God and for my fellow-creatures! Jesus was with me by day and by night, and this first and happy season of love continued many months.

The next spring I heard the first German missionary, Rev. Sebastian Barth, preach. The time had come when I was to be admitted into full connection of Church fellowship; but now I was so much troubled and tempted about the mode of baptism that I refused it for some time till I was convinced, both experimentally and understandingly, that it is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and not of water, that saves the world from sin. Brother Chandler was a kind and helping father to me in those troubles. After this I was offered license to exhort; but it came so unexpectedly to me that I did not accept

it till my mind had become right in this matter also. It was in Benton county, Missouri, that I first attempted to hold out the crucified Savior to sinners. Satan like a lion came upon me and tempted me that religion was all nothing. Fear and shame befell me. At last I thought that I was not converted myself. I went out in the woods, and upon the ground I lifted up my heart to God. There it was that a heavenly light, quick as lightning, broke in upon my soul, and before the mercy-seat of heaven I held on each of my hands one of those persons engaged in prayer for the pardon of sins. I went into the house with brother Barth, to whom I related what I had experienced. Prayer meeting commenced, and erelong the power of the Holy Ghost came down upon us. Upward of thirty persons were struck to the floor, pleading with God for mercy. Many powerful conversions took place, and my poor soul was so filled with a bliss of heaven and its realities that I was ready to take wings and fly away where Jesus is. Fear of death and hell had fled. I was saved—saved in the arms of the Lord. I prayed him to take me up, and if not now, to let me die in such a state.

Several months after I came to the same place. The devil buffeted me again—suggesting that I was not called to preach. I prayed to God in the morning, and as day broke I heard a loud voice speak: "Fear not, I have called thee." I arose, and brother Barth informed me that he was not well enough to preach, and I must do it in his place. I preached three times the next day, obtained license, and was recommended to the Missouri annual conference, where I was received in 1844, and appointed to the South St.

Louis mission. I found twenty-three members there and the corner-stone of a church-building, laid during conference. I collected money to finish the basement for winter, where we then held our meetings, with the intention to finish the church the ensuing year, but was prevented by reason of sickness. At the close of my labor our numbers were doubled. At the Illinois annual conference, at Springfield, in September, 1845, I was ordained deacon by Bishop Morris, and appointed to North St. Louis station, containing about one hundred members. The Lord blessed us there with a glorious revival, and at the end of the year we numbered two hundred. I was ordained elder by Bishop Hamline September, 1846, at the Illinois annual conference, at Paris, and reappointed to St. Louis station. Our little church, built five years before, had now become too small. We therefore, in the spring of 1847, took it down and built a larger one on the same spot, which was dedicated immediately after the conference of 1847, when I was yet present in St. Louis. We had also during the year many precious seasons from on high. Many souls were converted, and our numbers increased. I had seen and experienced wonderful things. At the Illinois annual conference, in September, 1847, at Jacksonville, I was appointed to Milwaukie mission, and to visit in place of the presiding elder three times during the year Chicago, Galena, Dubuque, Jefferson, and Milwaukie missions. In Milwaukie I found seven members; but, thanks be to God! he has done good things for us here also.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### C. SCHELPER—S. BARTH—H. KOCH—J. MANN

#### EXPERIENCE OF CHARLES SCHELPER.

In the year 1836 I came to Wheeling, Virginia, and made my residence there. In Germany I had never heard any thing of Methodism, except through the manifold misrepresentation of the German Lutherans. Here I was induced to go to the church to see what was going on; but, thanks be to God! I found things quite different from what had been represented to me. I was induced to visit the church frequently, till finally, after a year and six months of my residence in Wheeling, God, through his infinite mercy, revealed his grace to me, a poor sinner, and worked repentance in my heart. I was brought to see my sins and my misery to such a degree that, at first, I could scarcely believe there was yet mercy for me. But the precious Savior commenced the work of salvation in my soul, and he also brought it to a glorious consummation. The preacher then stationed there was Rev. Wesley Browning, and in the spring of 1838, under his ministry, I was converted. After this I commenced to speak to the people, and the Lord blessed my efforts. More were soon willing to go with us; and at the next Christmas brother Swahlen came to us as missionary. God carried on his work gloriously, and I began to feel it my duty to go out and

labor for God in his vineyard; but I felt too weak, and for a while strove against the call. There seemed to be many difficulties in the way; but these were at length surmounted, and in 1841 I was licensed as local preacher. Though I had once refused to go, I felt that I must do my duty, and accordingly I started in the year 1844; since then the Lord has blessed my feeble efforts.

### EXPERIENCE OF SEBASTIAN BARTH.

I was one who served God after the tradition of the fathers, and knew nothing of that hidden treasure of which the Gospel speaks, till one of my friends in Louisville invited me to visit with him a certain church where, as he told me, an old man by the name of Schmucker was preaching. I went one Sunday evening with him, and heard the preacher with much satisfaction. At the close of the sermon the preacher gave out a class meeting for the following Sabbath afternoon, and as I was quite a stranger to such religious exercises, I was induced to go to the class meeting, more out of curiosity than from any other motive. Here, for the first time in my life, I heard the language of Canaan, which was like a joyful sound to my inner nature, till I was awakened as one from a dream, and began to see my sad condition as a sinner. After the meeting an invitation was given to all such as wished to seek the salvation of their souls, to join the Church, and I went forward and gave my name to the preacher, without knowing what Church I had joined till afterward they began to persecute me as a Methodist. But as I had once taken this people for my people, and their God for

my God, I could not be changed in my purpose, for I felt more and more the necessity of being reconciled to God, and so my soul was drawn out to seek the Lord.

I sought for weeks, with crying and tears, but found him not, and the reason was nothing but unbelief, till I finally exclaimed, in the anguish of my soul, "O, Lord! how long must I yet go about with my load of sins upon me?" Then I heard a voice whispering within me, "The blood of Christ was also shed for thee." In looking up to him by simple faith my heart was filled with joy, and my load of sins was at once removed. But soon doubts arose, and I lost all my joy; yet I thank God that he kept me by his power, and sustained me till I again heard my Savior's voice saying to me, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Unfortunately, soon after my conversion, a book fell into my hands which distracted my mind and caused me much grief, and for some time led me astray; yet I came to the Lord with earnest prayer, and he delivered me, and at the same time gave me such an ardent desire to labor for the good of my countrymen that I felt almost as great a struggle of soul as I had when I first sought the Lord. By praying and seeking, the Lord finally let the light of his countenance shine upon me. Father Schmucker explained to me how preachers were received into the Methodist Church, and made an appointment for me to exhort, which I did with great fear; and now new temptations came. The question of baptism agitated our society, and I became entangled in the discussion till I had again lost my peace and got out of the

way. After these storms had passed over I was again united with the society; and now the inward desire to labor in public for God's cause was increased in me, and through our brother Schmucker I was appointed to labor as colporteur in Louisville and Cincinnati. In 1842, in Louisville, I received license to exhort, and with my brother Philip I was sent to St. Louis, Missouri, where we labored with great success among the scattered Germans.

This was the best school I could have had to prepare me for a preacher; for wherever I could find a few scattered Germans I got them together, and exhorted them, and prayed with them. Thus I was gradually delivered from my fears, and the love of God was kindled more and more in my heart, and under the teachings and encouragement of brothers Jacoby and Schreck I was strengthened in the work, and by their patience and kindness I was thus prepared for my future labors. Upon their recommendation, in the year 1843, I received license to preach, and was sent to Versailles mission. I went to my work with fear and trembling, but with confidence in Him who said, "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth; and, lo, I am with you always to the end of the world." I soon found that the Lord was with me, and sinners were awakened and converted; and in my first year one hundred souls were added to the Church, most of whom had been converted, and were happy in the Lord.

I was returned to this mission the second year, and the year following was sent to Burlington, Iowa. There I was received kindly, and the English brethren gave me the basement of their church to preach in.

Notwithstanding the opposition I first met with, I soon got a few children together and organized a Sabbath school, which soon drew a number of the parents. At the end of this year I was ordained elder by Bishop Hamline, and returned to the same field. My aim, ever since my first commencement in this work, has been to live a holy life, and to serve God with a humble and loving heart all the days of my life.

### EXPERIENCE OF HERMAN KOCH.

In the year 1834 I migrated to America, with the view of becoming a wealthy citizen; and, in order to attain this end, I exerted all my powers, and thus I was an earthly, carnally-minded man, without God and without Christ in the world. Notwithstanding I had received a religious training in my youth, I lived, as the heathens do, in all manner of ungodliness. I often took the sacrament in the Lutheran Church, and received absolution from the preacher, but received no pardon for my sins; and, with all this, I remained in my sins and under the power of Satan, and was daily in danger of being finally lost. But God, who has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, sought me out by his good Providence and humbled me by his chastening rod, for my heart was hardened and full of corruption.

In my sickness I promised God if he would allow me to recover, I would serve him all the days of my life, and he heard my cry and did not cut down the unfruitful cumberer of the ground. After I had made this vow unto the Lord, his Spirit convinced me of sin and showed me that there was no power in me to

resist the corruptions of my depraved heart, and now I saw more clearly the slavery and thralldom of sin. I then went to Cincinnati, and heard that there were German Methodists there. I attended their preaching, and also went several times to their class meetings; but here I felt my sins like mountains on my heart, and fear and trembling seized me as I heard the children of God tell of Jesus and his grace. I left the meetings and again turned my heart toward Sodom; but the good Spirit followed me, and I again went back to meeting, and from four to five months I was under deep awakening. The enemy often tempted me sorely, yet I continued to pray with strong crying and tears before a throne of grace; and I thank God, that after a long struggle against the powers of darkness, Jesus shone into my heart as the bright morning star—joy and peace sprang up in my soul, and I could say, "My Lord and my God." This peace I received at the hour of midnight, and on the next day I declared what the Lord had done for my soul.

In my Christian life I have passed through severe trials and temptations, and especially since God has called me to labor in his vineyard; but his grace is sufficient for us. My desire is to be wholly devoted to the Lord, consecrated to his service, that I may not finally myself become a castaway.

### EXPERIENCE OF JOHN MANN.

In the year 1833 I was awakened under a sermon preached by a brother Windin, in Alleghany county, Pennsylvania, and immediately I had a desire to

obtain an evidence of my acceptance with God. But, as I could not speak English, and as I wanted to find some Germans with whom I could converse on the subject of religion, I removed to Monroe county, Ohio, where there was a large German settlement. Here I had expected to find some pious Germans; but, alas, I found none! not even one!

By good fortune there was an English Methodist preacher in this neighborhood, whose ministrations I attended. As he always preached earnestly, though I could not understand him, I felt the power of his words in my heart, and continued to feel more sensibly the load of my sins pressing me down. When the minister saw my embarrassment he sent for a local preacher, who could speak some German, to come and converse with me. He prayed for me, and pointed me to the Savior in my own language. For three weeks I continued in great distress of mind. My neighbors persecuted me, and said my mind was deranged, so that my wife was afraid of me. My sorrows continued to increase, and I wept day and night, mourning over my sins. At last it pleased God to deliver me from my sorrows. It was on the fourth of February, 1836, when the Lord revealed himself, in great mercy, to me, while I was praying to him in the open field. Then I found pardon in the blood of the Lamb. The Lord filled my heart, and the love of Christ constrained me to tell my neighbors what the Lord had done for me. Three years after my conversion I consecrated myself more fully to God, and found that holiness which the Gospel demands, and without which we can not see the Lord.

I have labored a number of years as German mis-

sionary, and have had many happy seasons. My prayer is, that the Lord may keep me humble, and let me feel more and more my own unworthiness and his grace.

# CHAPTER XX.

## JOHN PHETZING—CONRAD GAHN

### EXPERIENCE OF JOHN PHETZING.

I WAS born in Kurhessen, in 1814, and brought up in the Reformed Church according to the customs of the country. I was deeply awakened several times in my native country, but had no one to teach or lead me in the right way, and therefore continued to live in my sins as did others. On one occasion we were reading our Lord's sermon on the Mount, and our teacher in giving us an explanation of it said to us: "Children, if we are indeed required to live as strictly as this sermon of our Lord seems to demand of us, I know of no one in all our country that will be saved; yet I believe the Bible was only written to keep us from outbreaking sins." These instructions of my teacher inspired in me a false hope, in which I lived for some time.

In the year 1836 I left my native land for America, with a view to lead a better life, and thought I would commence to do so on the ship. At first I supposed that all on board must be very pious or the ship would surely sink, but when I saw the ungodliness of the crew, and the ship still riding safely over the waves, I began to conclude that the Lord after all would not be so strict with us, and so I grew careless again.

When I left home an old man made me promise to

repeat the Lord's prayer as soon I set foot on American soil; but when we landed in Baltimore I was surrounded by a large crowd of people, and I could not bring myself to fulfill my promise. From Baltimore I went to Wheeling, where I found employment; and for the first year after my arrival I repeated my prayers, night and morning, such as I had committed to memory in childhood. Then I became associated with scoffers of religion, and entirely quit my prayers, grew worse and worse till I became a doubter of the truths of the holy Scriptures. I was employed in a grocery where whisky and other strong drink was sold, and I became somewhat addicted to drinking.

In this condition I continued till the year 1839, when I was visited by brother Riemenschneider. He had formerly been an associate of mine in Wheeling, but had gone to Pittsburg some six months previously, and there had heard brother Nast preach, and had been awakened and converted. When he returned to Wheeling and called upon me, I began with my foolishness, as on former occasions, for I delighted in causing people to laugh, and was accustomed to write down all kinds of silly jokes, so that when I met my comrades I might read them and thus excite their mirth. On this occasion, when brother Riemenschneider visited me, I began in my old way, but he soon looked very serious at me, and said, "Phetzing, I can not hear such stuff as that, but if you will go to prayer meeting, come with me." These words so affected me that I did not stop to read what I had written, but went home and threw the paper into the fire.

Much as I was affected I still hated the thought

that my friend Riemenschneider had become a Methodist, for I despised the name. I went into my room and drew a picture of the devil, according to the best idea I had of his appearance—with horns, tail, and fearful claws. When I had finished my picture I was strangely affected, so that wherever I went that fearful image moved before my eyes and I could not get rid of it. A voice within whispered to me, "Such a devil will finally get you if you do not repent." And this impression became so strong that it tormented me.

Soon after this I went into a house of one of the Methodists on Sunday, and was invited to go to the class meeting. Brother Swahlen led the class, and I was astonished at the narration of religious experiences given by the members and at the exhortation of the preacher; but trembled from fear that he would come to me also. He finally approached me and said, "Young man, are you also willing to flee from the wrath to come?" I was offended at his question, and thought if I said *yes* they would consider me one of their members, and if I said *no* they would think I was determined to go to destruction. The preacher extending to me his hand, I hesitatingly took it, and said, "Yes, I will flee the wrath to come." I became very much affected; so they kneeled down and prayed for me, and at that class meeting I joined the Church.

At night I returned to the store, where I slept, and thought I would take my usual evening dram; but as I was about to do so I recollected the expression of a sister, whom I once heard say that if we had temptations to do any thing wrong we should immediately fall down on our knees and pray to God

for deliverance. I followed this advice, kneeled down and prayed, and for that time gained the victory. But the next morning the struggle came again. As the customers came in, and I had to fill their vessels, and the fumes of the liquor arose from the barrels, I had a strong temptation to drink; but I went to prayer as I did the evening before, and the Lord gave me the victory again. And I had that day such a distaste against strong drink that I was never tempted to taste it afterward, although for some time longer I continued to deal it out. One day as I was rolling up a number of *brandy casks*, I involuntarily commenced preaching to them; but soon became alarmed, and thought I had committed a great sin, and kneeled down among them, and prayed God to pardon this sin. On account of my business I could not attend the meetings regularly. Yet I continued to read my Bible and to pray in secret at every opportunity.

About this time there were a number converted to God, but I was still unconverted. One Sabbath I locked myself up in my room and resolved to read seven chapters out of the Bible and pray seven times. After I had done this I arose from my knees, sprang up, and went away doubting the truth of religion. A narrow escape from death by the discharge of a loaded pistol, which I was handling, brought me to my knees again, and I thanked God that I had not been sent into eternity in my hardened and unbelieving condition. I began anew to seek the salvation of my soul, and so continued for six months, when I again became impatient and unbelieving, and threw the Bible from me, thinking I would not read

it again. Happening, however, to pick it up as it lay open before me, my eyes fell upon these words, "I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake." Acts ix, 16. These words brought tears from my eyes. I took the Bible, pressed it to my heart, and said, "I will read this book and follow its directions, and rather go to destruction a penitent seeker than go back and become hardened again." With this determination I continued some weeks, till one Sunday morning, when I read "Arndt's True Christianity." After I had read a while I kneeled down and prayed; and while I was praying the Lord appeared to my soul and delivered me and gave peace and pardon, and on the same day I went to the class and declared the joyful tidings of my deliverance from the bondage of sin.

Soon after my conversion I made a visit to my native country. When I arrived among my old associates in Germany I was soon met with friendly greetings; and, according to custom, the bottle was soon brought, and a glass of whisky poured out. I was requested to drink with them, but I refused. This caused my friends to look at me with astonishment, and to ask whether people in America did not drink. Upon which I replied that I did not drink any, and commenced to give them a temperance lecture, telling them the evils of intemperance and the ruin it had brought into many families. I then pointed to one after another among them who had lost house and home by indulging in this sinful habit, and finally brought them so far that none of them would drink. When dinner was ready, and they were about to begin eating without the asking of a

blessing, I told them that in America we were in the habit of praying when we eat, and I asked the blessing of God upon the victuals before us. In the evening, when we were about to retire to sleep, I took the Bible and told them that in America we read the Bible and prayed in our families. So I read a chapter, and then kneeled down and prayed with them.

The schoolmaster of the place soon heard of it, and reported to his school that I had become a Roman Catholic, because I kneeled when I prayed; and warned all the people against me. I, however, had taken a bundle of the Christian Apologist and religious tracts with me, and distributed them among the people. By reading these they soon found out that I was not a Roman Catholic, and they were then quite severe against the schoolmaster for having slandered me. I found that the schoolmaster had exerted a bad influence among the children by telling them that it was not necessary to ask a blessing at the table, and through this many had neglected even this common form of worship, while family prayer was scarcely ever thought of.

On one occasion I was sent for to go and pray for a sick woman; and when I started in company with my brother, he said to me, "Shall we not take the Prayer-Book with us?" I told him we did not need it. I went and prayed extemporaneously with the woman; and while I kneeled down and prayed the family and friends present stood and looked on with great surprise, perhaps never having seen such a sight before.

But I have not time to enter into a detail of the various occurrences during my visit to my old friends.

I hope that the tracts and Apologists which I distributed, together with what I told them of the grace of God manifested to us in America, left some good impression upon their minds.

After a stay of about six weeks there, I started back for our beloved and free America, glad that I had found a home here, and especially glad that this happy land had been made more dear to me by being the land of my spiritual birth. When I once more was permitted to set my feet on American soil, and thought of the religious liberties which we here enjoy, I felt like prostrating myself to the earth, and kissing the ground on which I walked.

I went from Baltimore, where I landed, to Pittsburg, and soon, yielding to the convictions of my own conscience and the call of the Church, I commenced to labor for the good of my countrymen. In two years afterward I started out as a German missionary. It would be too tedious to relate my labors, conflicts, and triumphs in the cause of my blessed Savior. Hitherto the Lord hath helped me, and I am still willing to spend my time and strength in his service.

### EXPERIENCE OF CONRAD GAHN.

I was born on the 9th of February, 1818, in the grand duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany. From my sixth to my fourteenth year I was sent to school, where I enjoyed the instruction of a faithful teacher. In my fourteenth year I was confirmed, and recognized by the preacher and the people as a member of the Church, and was declared to be a Christian. But I considered myself an ungodly sinner, and a rebel against God.

In my childhood God wrought powerfully in my heart, so that often, when I was alone and thought of my life, I burst into tears, and exclaimed, "God, be mereiful to me a sinner." I often thought it would have been better for me if I had never been born; for I had no one to lead me in the right way, and I knew not the way in whieh to go. What darkened my mind the most was our preaeher himself, and the whole community. I often viewed the eonduet of the preaeher and members of the Chureh, but eould find no Christian example; and I venture to say there was not one of them converted. My great misfortune is that I did not follow the teaehings of the Holy Spirit, whieh urged me to read my Bible and take it for the rulc of my life.

Finally, my pious feelings left me, and I sank into a state of carnal security, and could drink in iniquity like water. I was even tainted with rationalism, so that I eonstantly became worse, and sought to spend my youthful days in folly, which often brought me into great danger and embarrassmcnt.

But suddenly my earlier pious inelinations returned, my conscienee again commeneed to reprove me as much as ever, and I once more felt the necessity of a ehange of heart. · I refleeted on my eondition, and eoneluded that it would be impossible for me to lead a Christian life in my father-land. I therefore resolved to leave all my ungodly associates and emigrate to Ameriea. With staff in hand I started on my journey, and came safely aeross the great oeean.

On arriving in Ameriea I soon fell into my old habits, so that instead of seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, I sought the world with its

pleasures. I settled in Sandusky county, Ohio; and in the early part of my residence there I heard no scrmons, and the Sabbath was spent like a week-day. The German settlers finally hired a Lutheran preacher; but the people remained in their old condition, and I again fell into a rationalistic belief. The Church to which I belonged had members who would curse, swear, drink whisky; and, to my shame, I must confess that I was onc of the foremost in all these crimes.

But thanks be to God! suddenly an alarm was given that the false prophets, as the German Methodist preachers were called, had comc into the neighborhood. For a long time I would not go to hear thcm; for as I knew there was but very little religion in the Church to which I belonged, I thought there would be none at all among the Methodists. I, however, heard many things about the Methodists and their manner of worship, the mourners' bench, praying in the spirit, etc. Finally, my wife persuaded me to go with her to a Methodist prayer mecting. There was a revival just then going on in the Church, and I saw many, whom I had known previously going on hcedlessly in a course of sin, now earnestly praying for mcrcy. Suddenly my sins came upon me like a mighty torrent, the tears rolled in streams from my eyes, and I was convinced that this was the right way to heaven. I immediately formed the resolution, that if there was yet mercy for me in heaven, to seek it by repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. But I was afraid that I had come too late, and had carried my course of sin too far; but my resolution was firm to pray, and if I were cast into hell I rcsolvcd to go calling for mercy.

The prayer meeting closed, and my wife and I left the house. I remarked to her: "As you persuaded me to go with you to the church, now tell me what do you think of this matter." She replied, "I do not think much of it. I believe such confusion is not acceptable to God, but indeed we should do better than we have been doing." I answered her, "I am determined to seek religion, and if God will give grace in secret and silent prayer I will receive it thankfully; but should my feelings induce me to cry aloud I will do it; God's word is not against loud praying. I must have religion or be lost." We came home and there I met one of my ungodly comrades. As soon as he got sight of me, he said to me, "Are you sick, or what ails you?" I said to him: "I am sick in my soul and right dangerously, too, and if you and I do not repent, we will both go to hell; and there is no doubt about it." He immediately replied: "You are right; we have been the most ungodly in the neighborhood, but only be cheerful. I think it will soon go better with us, for the Lord has sent his servant among us. Yesterday there was a German Methodist preacher at my house by the name of E. Riemenschneider, and asked of me the privilege of preaching in my house, to which I gave my consent. Come over then and we will do better."

Brother Riemenschneider preached frequently; but for some time it appeared that his labor was in vain. No one seemed willing to make a start, and my own convictions were not as strong as they had been at first. Yet I had been sufficiently instructed by the preaching of the Gospel, that I knew the way and defended the truth, but I had not obtained that which I was

seeking for, namely, the pardon of my sins. In this sorrowful condition I lived for some time under great persecution, and it was said in our neighborhood that the first one who joined the Methodist Church should be driven out of the place. I now could not go with the wicked world, neither could I count myself with the people of God. This was indeed a mournful time with me. I began to doubt whether there was mercy for me; yet I thought upon my promise to the Lord, namely, to pray for mercy till I found it. I had tried all along to leave off my sins gradually, but I made poor progress, and found ceasing from habits of sin was not pardon for past sins.

Brother Riemenschneider stopped preaching in our neighborhood for a time, and his nearest preaching-place was five miles from my house, but the distance was not too great for me, and I continued to attend the meeting. There was a two-days' meeting appointed, and I went on Saturday evening earnestly seeking and praying for the pardon of my sins. About ten o'clock at night, I felt that if the Son of God makes free, we are free indeed. The word of power came down to me, "Be of good cheer; thy sins are all forgiven thee." I then received the Spirit of adoption, by which I cried, "Abba, Father." This was on the fourth day of May, 1843.

Brother Riemenschneider opened the door of the Church and I gave him my name, with a determination to work out my salvation with fear and trembling so long as I have to remain in this vale of tears. We organized a class and held prayer meetings among us, and our number gradually increased till we had seventeen.

Soon after my conversion I felt that I ought to preach, but became much alarmed at this thought, and would often fall upon my knees and pray to God to take such feelings from me. Fear and trembling often seized me; for I thought it was the enemy of my soul who put such desires into my mind, to excite in me pride, and thus cause my fall. I was always willing to do the will of God, but I did not believe that this was his will. I knew that my education was limited, and I did not consider myself competent and holy enough for such an important calling. I then commenced to contend against these feelings, and to banish them from my mind, and in this way come very near losing my religious enjoyment. I was as deeply distressed in my mind as when I was a penitent seeker, and could get no light. I was ashamed to mention my feelings to any one, though I sometimes thought I would make them known to brother Riemenschneider. No one knew any thing of it, and for whole nights on my bed I contended with these feelings. But my impressions became stronger, and often in meeting I felt like rising and talking to the people, and sometimes had to hold myself back to keep from making disturbance in the congregation. While I thought no one knew any thing of my feelings, I found I was mistaken; for one day a pious brother said to me: "Brother Gahn, I believe God has called you to preach." I became alarmed, turned the conversation to another subject, and left him as soon as possible. On my way home I met another brother in whom I had the greatest confidence, and told him how it had been with me for a long time past. He told me the same that the

first brother had said, and also remarked that the whole class was of the same opinion. "But, brother Gahn," said he, "you must put your trust in God." Tears filled my eyes and I went home. Brother Bier was then missionary on the Sandusky mission, and to him I made known my feelings, and he gave me much encouragement and comfort. He told me not to banish such thoughts from my mind, but to resign myself to the will of the Lord, assuring me that he would direct me aright.

I became class-leader, and exercised my talents in talking to the people, and had great enjoyments in the discharge of this duty. I resigned myself quietly to the will of God, often believing that my feelings moving me to preach would finally leave me; but this was not the case. I received license to exhort on the 12th of June, 1845.

I often felt the powers of the world to come and the blessing of God richly resting upon me, but I was still not willing to preach, for I knew my own unfitness. Brother Schmucker came as presiding elder and talked to me on the subject. I said to him: "I am not sufficiently educated." He replied: "If God has called you to preach he will prepare you for the work." And then he told me to pray much, read my Bible with diligence, live humble and pious.

I received license to preach on the 15th of April, 1846, and began to labor as a local preacher. During the week I followed my regular employment, and on Sabbath I went to my appointments, and often had refreshing seasons from the Lord; but many a time I had severe trials to pass through, yet my Savior stood by me.

The last quarterly conference for the year arrived, and a proposition was made to me to take a recommendation from it to the annual conference to enter the traveling connection. I hesitated, as I had worked hard to clear up my farm, and was prepared to live comfortably on it. By the advice of brother Schmucker, however, I gave myself wholly to the Lord, and I can now say I am well satisfied with my lot. I was recommended and received into the Ohio conference in the year 1846.

On my way to the first appointment I was taken sick with a violent fever, so that there were great doubts about my recovery. Then the enemy again came with his temptations, suggesting to me that this was an evidence that the Lord had not called me. But by the grace of God the enemy was vanquished, for I could truly say, If it is not the will of God that I should preach, I thank him that he has thus hedged up my way, even if it should be by my death. But I recovered from my sickness, and afterward enjoyed good health. I went to my mission, leaving my wife and four children at home. God gave me grace to bid family and friends farewell, and I arrived safe at my first mission, and was received with kindness. Since that time I have passed through severe trials and temptations, but hitherto the Lord hath helped me, and I thank him for all his goodness, and I hope that he who has begun a good work in me will carry it on till the day of redemption. With a dependence on him who has sustained me thus far,

"I'll lift my hands, I'll raise my voice,
While I have breath to pray or praise:
This work shall make my heart rejoice,
And fill the remnant of my days."

# CHAPTER XXI.

## JOHN HAAS—WILLIAM FIEGENBAUM—J L. WALTHER.

### EXPERIENCE OF JOHN HAAS.

I LIVED with my family in St. Louis when brother Jacoby was sent there as German missionary, and in the second year of his ministry I sent my children to his Sunday school. They became very much attached to it, and notwithstanding the prejudice of many of my German neighbors against the Methodists, I was not so bigoted as to keep my children away, for I found that what they learned was according to the teachings of the Bible. I myself had no practical religion nor any experimental knowledge of a change of heart, but was satisfied with being called a Lutheran. In the mean time the good seed that was sown in the hearts of the children in the Sabbath school began to grow. They prayed at home, and joyfully went to the meetings of the Methodists, though I myself had no desire to go to any church.

The youngest of my three boys frequently took the Bible at home and read it, and then kneeled down and prayed. This made me feel ashamed of myself, as I had lived prayerless and spent my life in the world, though I had the name of a Christian. My wife commenced going with the children to meeting, and also sometimes went to prayer meeting, and was soon

awakened to see her lost condition and her need of a Savior, and would gladly have joined the Church if she had not been afraid of me. She spoke to me on the subject and asked my opinion about repentance and conversion, and told me that it was her desire and wish to be converted, and asked me kindly and mildly whether I would not once go with her to the German Methodist church; but this I was not then prepared to do.

One Sabbath evening, however, as my wife and children were preparing to go to the church, my children looked sad and my wife was grieved because I would not go with them. All their eyes were turned to me, and they exhibited an anxious desire for me to go, and seemed as though they were afraid to ask. Yet my little boy came to me and took me by my right hand, and said: "Father, come along with us to church; come, father, do go with us." This invitation from the innocent child melted me down. His words were as a hammer to break my stony heart. I was completely subdued, but did not wish it to be known that he was stronger than I and had conquered me; so I allowed them to go on alone to meeting, and I gathered up my remaining courage to go to the card-table. I set out and got as far as the door of the house, but here I paused; I could not go in, for it appeared to me that the tender hand of my little boy was holding me back. His voice was still sounding in my ears, "Come along with us to church;" and thus, while struggling with myself, I gathered resolution and turned to go. On the way I had to contend with my old propensity and against my deep-rooted habits of sin and the power of the devil; but I was overcome and turned back to my place of sinful amusement.

Here I stood for the second time before the door, but had not the power nor the courage to go in. So I went back and forth till I stood for the third time before the house, where I had spent so many evenings in playing cards. As I now reflected on my past life I was seized with fear and horror at a recollection of the past, and made the solemn resolution to go to the church; so I went and the Lord strengthened me in my purpose.

Religious services had commenced, and brother Jacoby was just beginning to preach; I was astonished, as I sat under the preaching of the word, that every thing appeared so appropriate to my case. I thought, how is it possible that the preacher should know my heart so well? I was fully convinced by the word of God and the operation of his Holy Spirit, of my sinful condition, so that I felt myself quite lost, and under sentence of condemnation. When the meeting closed I went home, leaving my family to come after me, and they were astonished and rejoiced when I told them that I had been in the Methodist church. On the next Thursday evening, as there was preaching again, my wife and I went, and both of us joined the Church. On Friday evening there was prayer meeting in the church, which seekers of salvation were invited to attend. I went with my heavy-burdened heart to seek for peace, but I found it not. My distress appeared to increase, I felt humbled before God and man, and durst scarcely to look up. I felt as if I were unworthy of society, and almost feared that the earth would open itself to receive me.

On Saturday afternoon I went to the house of brother Jacoby to get him to pray for me. There

were several brethren there when I came, and they all prayed with me and pointed me to my Savior, and told me that I too could find pardon for my sins in the blood of the Lamb if I could come to him by faith. I lay before the mercy-seat, and called out like Peter, "Save Lord, or I perish!" But the hour of my deliverance had not come. Forsaken by Christ, as I believed, eternal condemnation appeared to be my sad fate. In this sorrowful condition I went to bed at night, rolled about in anguish, and moistened my pillow with my tears. Satan appeared to stand before me and claim me as his own. With anguish, and a strong and intense desire, I looked once more to the Savior, and besought him to receive me and not let me fall into the hands of my enemy. Now the Lord revealed himself to me as I opened my mouth to speak. While the name of Jesus was on my tongue his love penetrated and filled my heart, so that I could love him as I had never loved before. I rejoiced in my Savior who had crowned me with joy and gladness. Anguish and fear had now vanished away, the love of God streamed through my soul, and I was fully convinced that he had adopted me as his child, and I was happy in a union and communion with him. Finally the morning dawned, and I could for the first time arise from my bed as a sinner saved by the blood of Christ. This was the first Sabbath in May, 1843.

Immediately after my conversion I felt myself moved to tell my friends and relations what the merciful God, in his free grace through Christ Jesus, had done for my poor soul. At first they were much opposed and offended, and thought I had fallen from the faith of my fathers; but I thank God that they also

were afterward converted. I rejoiced in the service of the God of my salvation, and it was the desire of my heart to labor in his cause and to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; but I had often to complain of my own unfaithfulness and shortcomings which have caused me many a conflict. About two years after my conversion I felt a gradually increasing impression that I should preach; but I was afraid to say any thing about it to my brethren, as I could have believed any thing in the world sooner than that I should yet be a preacher. Yet the Lord's ways are not our ways; I had been a class-leader for more than one year, and we had many a happy season. The impression that I ought to preach followed me, and there seemed to be a voice within me urging me on to preach.

The preachers saw fit to license me to exhort, and some time after gave me license to preach, according to the rule of our Discipline. I commenced with much fear and diffidence; yet the brethren encouraged me, and told me to continue, and that perhaps the Lord would yet use me as an instrument in his hands to advance his cause. Upon this I concluded to give myself wholly to the Lord, and to follow the openings of his providence. In the mean time the conference of 1845 approached. Brother Jacoby told me to hold myself in readiness to go out and labor among my countrymen, which I accordingly did, and the same year was appointed to labor, under the presiding elder, on Palmyra mission, Missouri.

I went, in the name of the Lord, with a hope soon to see some fruits of my labor; but for the first six

months all was dark and discouraging, and the enemy of my soul tempted me to go home and give it up. But all this drew me nearer to the Savior and induced me to lay my case before him. He strengthened and helped me; and while I have labored in this work, I have had the pleasure of seeing many souls born into the kingdom of God. I am thankful for the number of my countrymen that have already been brought to Christ. My own soul is happy in my blessed Savior, and I am determined to press after holiness, that finally, through the abounding grace of God, I may be received into his kingdom.

### EXPERIENCE OF WILLIAM FIEGENBAUM.

I was in my tenth year when my parents concluded to emigrate to America. While we remained at the tavern in Bremen, I found an old Hymn-Book, in which I read the following lines:

> "He who seeks for earthly treasures
> Can not my disciple be."

This so affected my heart that I wept aloud, and showed the lines to my father, and told him we were not Christ's disciples, for we were seeking earthly treasures. I was, however, comforted by my parents when they told me that the hymn was not the word of God, but man's composition.

In my school years, from twelve to sixteen, I often thought if all these people, who call themselves Christians, are so, then the Bible can not be true. The time of my catechetical instruction was a very sinful part of my life; yet my conscience waked up as I received the holy sacrament, and condemned me for having taken it unworthily, and I went home with

a load of sin upon my heart. Still I had a desire to partake of this holy sacrament worthily.

There was a report of some German Methodists in Ohio who were said to have fallen from the faith. Finally, a number of German Methodists came to Missouri; but the preachers were hated and persecuted, and, in many places, deprived of the privilege of preaching. Yet my parents opened their house and allowed them to preach in it. After this I went to St. Louis, and one evening went to the Methodist church. The sermon awakened me to a sense of my lost condition. The word was "quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow, and was a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." My heart was very much affected, and I at once resolved to join the Methodist Church. Now a voice, as from my heavenly Father, came to me, to repent, return, and be converted; and to this was added the exhortation of my brother and sister. This induced me, on the next Sabbath, to go to the church again. After the sermon there was prayer meeting; but my heart remained cold and indifferent. While penitents were kneeling around the altar, I was induced by curiosity to go up close and see who it was that cried so earnestly for the pardon of his sins. It was my brother, who had previously been a violent persecutor of the children of God. He lay there pleading for mercy, while the pious were offering up prayers for his salvation. I was at once convicted of sin, and sought to meet with the children of God. I spent fourteen days seeking for pardon; others prayed with me; but though thus seeking I could not find.

On the following Sabbath I went again. This was a day of the Lord to my soul. The preacher, Rev C. Jost, took for his text, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." After the sermon it was asked how it was with me, and I was told that I must seek earnestly by faith; for the "kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." This I experienced, indeed, when I lay down in the evening to sleep, and offered up my soul to God, that he might seal it with the spirit of promise to the day of redemption. The joy that I found in a union with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is not to be fully expressed by human tongue. It was now my earnest desire to live near to the Lord, and to follow after holiness, without which no one shall see the Lord.

I had frequent impressions that I should preach, even previous to my conversion, and these impressions increased ten-fold afterward. The responsibility of the ministerial office for some time deterred me; yet my eyes were opened to see how all men had corrupted their way before the Lord, and I had an abiding impression on my mind of the wonderful love of God, which he manifested to the human family. I was often so affected that I went to others, and told them of their danger in neglecting their salvation. My heart was at the same time filled with joy and sorrow—the former from a view of God's goodness, the latter from a view of man's lost condition.

The impression that I should preach grew so strong that I told some of my friends of it; and they exhorted me not to resist this impression. At first I

felt a great struggle within, yet I was convinced that it was my duty to call sinners to repentance. I finally resolved to devote myself wholly to the service of the Lord. Now my soul was satisfied, and the Lord strengthened me in knowledge and in his grace and love to him. Soon after, I received license to preach. At my first efforts the Lord strengthened and blessed me. I commenced my labors in March, 1848, in the name of God. Since then I have seen many come from darkness to light. May the Lord keep us all faithful, and bring us at last to praise him before his throne!

### EXPERIENCE OF JOHN L. WALTHER.

I was born the 10th of September, 1818, in Culmbach, a town in the kingdom of Bavaria. My parents were members of the Lutheran Church, which, with the Catholic Church, is supported by the state. The spiritual life was so far lost sight of that scarcely any but rationalistic preachers were allowed to preach the Gospel. When I reached my seventh year, according to the laws of the country, I had to go to school, where, with other matters, I was compelled to commit the catechism to memory. It was customary for parents to select professions for their sons. My parents designed me for the ministry, and in my eleventh year they sent me to the sub-gymnasium, or elementary school, of our town, to commence the preparatory studies for the ministry. One of the teachers, who had himself studied theology, but who was a strict rationalist, gave instructions to the pupils. From him I drank in the rationalism which was afterward nourished by the preacher who confirmed me. The older I became the less inclination I had for the

profession to which I was destined by my parents, and against the will of my mother I left the institution. Dancing, drinking, and playing, in which the preachers themselves took part, and that, too, on the Sabbath, were very common; and so it was no wonder that I, a young man, with a heart inclined to sin, like thousands of others, fell a prey to the follies and customs of our times.

Four of our family emigrated, one after the other, to America. They wrote us many letters on the condition of this country, and the manners and customs of its inhabitants. These letters excited in me a desire to follow them, and on the 11th of September, 1840, I left my father-land and started for America. After a tedious journey by land and a stormy and dangerous sea-voyage, I, with sixty other passengers, arrived on the 1st of October in Baltimore. I soon found that gold is not to be picked up on the street, and that I must learn to work in order to support myself. I met with a friendly reception, and obtained employment in a Methodist family.

During our sea-voyage I became acquainted with an aged widow, who, in company with her daughter, came over to visit her son, who had been in America sixteen years, and who was then in Texas. Through this acquaintance I was introduced to her family, and with them I frequently visited a beautiful church, and heard a talented and eloquent rationalist preacher. The aged mother, seeking food for her soul, found no pleasure in the sermons of this man, and induced her daughter, to whom I was then betrothed, and myself to go with her to another church. Accordingly we went to a small and indifferent-looking church of the

evangelical society, founded by the pious and talented Albright. With the anointing from above we heard a youth preach there the word of God as we had never been accustomed to hear it.

One evening the sermon produced such an effect upon the heart of my intended bride that she prayed for mercy till she fell unconscious on the floor. I had never in my life seen such a thing; and, fearing for her life, I hastened to the altar, and with the aid of some of the women I carried her out of the church. After some exertion we brought her to consciousness again. My heart also was affected, yet I resisted the calls of the Spirit, and left off going to the church.

After my marriage, and the death of my mother-in-law, we removed to the west, in order to visit my relatives. In Cincinnati we met my brother-in-law and sister, who were then members of the Methodist Church. After a few days' sojourn with them I found I could not remain, for they prayed too much to suit me. My parents in the mean time had followed their children to America. Father was now dead, and my mother lived with one of my brothers. I went with my wife to see them, and found that they too had prayers in the family, and that my brother had become a Methodist. Out of respect to him we went to the German Methodist church, and heard brother Nast preach. My wife was awakened, and found her Savior in the pardon of her sins. This made a deep impression on my mind, and I joined the Church with her, and sought for pardon; but as I stopped seeking too soon, and took awakening for conversion, I had no power to resist the temptations of the enemy.

I began to find fault with my brethren, and overlooked my own sins and fell back.

After this I passed one of the most unfortunate years of my life; it was true that the conduct of some old members gave offense; yet a voice within said to me, what is that to thee? follow thou thy Savior. In vain did I seek to find rest by staying away from the church; in vain did I seek by sporting and worldly amusements to regain my former cheerfulness. My rest was gone; I went from one sin to another, conscious of my wrong, but I had no power to resist. I sought to keep my wife away from church, in which, after long persuasion, I succeeded. Yet, thank God! she did not cease to pray, notwithstanding she was kept from church for two years through my influence. She kept up family prayer, though I begged her to forego it, because I could not endure to hear her pray. She often prayed in secret, in which I often surprised her, and felt keener reproofs of conscience than ever before. Not long after she was taken very sick, and the physician who was called expressed the opinion that she could not live many days. Weeping I stood at the foot of her bed, reflecting on my sad condition. Deep sighs arose from my troubled breast, and when her feeble eyes opened she said, in broken sentences, "See, Walther, all this has come upon you because you would not pray." These words fell with weight upon my heart, and then and there I vowed to God to serve him with all my heart. Through the mercy of God my wife gradually recovered from her sickness, and I felt myself the more bound to perform my vow. Brother Kuhl was then stationed in St. Louis, where we now re-

sided, and held a protracted meeting in the Wash-Street church, in which he was aided by brother Koeneke. Without the knowledge of my wife I went to church every evening. God blessed the word, and sinners were awakened by scores. My poor heart was melted under the influence of the word of God, and every evening I was among the seeking penitents at the altar of prayer. One evening after another passed away, and sinners were converted on my right and left, and praised the Lord for his goodness and grace, while I was compelled to leave the church with a heavy heart. During the day I was sad and sorrowful, and at home said but little. I read my Bible and prayed in secret, but my wife noticed my conduct, and asked me the reason of it. I replied, "I am sick;" for I foolishly was ashamed to disclose to her the condition of my heart. Of evenings I went to church, yet weeks passed away and I found no peace.

One evening I prayed to God earnestly to show me the hinderance why I could not obtain the precious treasure. Then it occurred to me that I had disowned my Lord before her who had for two years earnestly prayed for me. Now I saw that I must bear the cross and confess the Lord; so the next morning I took the Bible and said to my wife, "Come, let us hold family worship." My wife was alarmed and thought I was only going to mock her, yet did not say a word. I read a chapter and tried to pray, but could only utter a few broken sentences. I arose from my knees with a heavy heart, and hastened out into the city. I spent the whole day in prayer and meditation on the word of God, and in the evening I

went to the church where a watch meeting was held. I again with others lay at the altar of prayer, wrestling and praying for a new heart; as I then tried to give my heart fully to Jesus, I apprehended him by the eye of faith, and heard the word spoken through God's Spirit, "Go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee." This was between twelve and one o'clock on the first of January, 1848. O, how often has the recollection of that hour cheered me in the midst of trials and temptations! With a joyful heart I went home, where I found my wife already gone to sleep. I praised God silently, laid me down to rest, but could scarcely sleep, and the next morning I arose with a joyful heart. After breakfast was over I took my Bible and read, "Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." I fell on my knees, and with tears of joy I praised and thanked God with a loud voice. My wife who had silently looked on my conduct was cheered and encouraged; her prayer was answered, and her unbelieving husband was converted. We wept tears of joy together, then held a prayer meeting and a love-feast all in our own room, and I related to her how my Savior had given me a new heart.

Soon after this we both joined the Methodist Church, and found in brother Kuhl a good friend and counselor, who soon gave me an opportunity to improve my talent by teaching a day-school. I, in succession, received license to exhort and to preach, and since 1851 I have been a traveling preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church, through the abounding grace of God, to whom be praise and honor forever!

## CHAPTER XXII.

### EXPERIENCE OF J M. WINKLER.

I WAS born the 25th of January, 1824, in Mandach, Rheinpfalz, Bavaria. My parents were strict members of the Roman Catholic Church. When only four or five years old, my mother used to lead me to the church, where we kneeled down before the images and paintings that were found there, and said our prayers according to the light and knowledge we then had. As I took especial delight in seeing the boys before the altar, waiting on the priests during mass, and from time to time ringing the little bells which they carried, I wished very much also to become like them, an acolyte or mass-servant. In a short time I had learned the Latin prayer, as well as the different ceremonies of the mass service; and before I was full seven years old, I was offered as mass-servant to the priest, who was much rejoiced to receive me. No one in the wide world felt happier than I did when I was clothed in the dress prescribed for my office.

When I was nine years old my beloved mother was taken very sick, and father sent me for the priest, that he might come and administer to her the last sacraments. When the priest arrived we all had to leave the room. My mother confessed, for the last time, and was absolved, and after this we were allowed to go into the room again. The sacrament of the

Lord's supper was then administered to her, and she received extreme unction; and in about fifteen minutes after these ceremonies her spirit left its mortal tenement. As I, in my child-like simplicity, thought over these things, and compared them all with the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, I felt very well satisfied in that all had been done on the part of the Church and the priest to secure her salvation. But how was I disturbed in my mind, and disappointed in my expectation, when told by the priest that my mother was not yet in heaven, but that she now found herself in purgatory, and that my father would yet have to pay a certain sum of money to have mass read for her to bring her out! This was too much for my tender, loving, and child-like feelings toward my dear mother. Half sorrowful and half provoked at the intelligence of the priest, I went home from the school-house in the afternoon, and between me and my father the following conversation occurred:

"Father," said I, "has our priest power to forgive sins?"

"Yes, my child," was his answer; "yes indeed; for our Lord Jesus says, 'Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted.'" "Now," I answered, "if this is true, why is mother yet in purgatory? The priest forgave her sins just before she died, and to-day he told me she was not in heaven yet, but remained in purgatory, where she had to do penance for her sins; and you must pay him some more money, and he will read mass for her, to bring her out of purgatory, and send her to heaven." "All that the priests tell us we must believe and do," was the answer of my father; "for

they are infallible." "Father," said I, "there is something here not clear to my mind. If our priest has power to forgive sins, then mother is not in purgatory. Now, do you keep your money, since the priest has no occasion to say any further mass for her." My father was much astonished at my expressions on this subject, and said nothing more, but went to the priest and told him my views of the pardon of sins and purgatory.

Up to this time I had stood high in the estimation of our priest, and he had previously expressed himself to my father, that "something might be made out of this boy;" and, as I afterward learned from my father, they had already commenced making arrangements for me to study for the priesthood. Now, all the interest the priest had taken in me was brought to a close, and his confidence and the promises which he had made me were at an end. Excited and angry he came home with my father, and said to me, "Whence have you received such devilish thoughts? Most certainly from the heretical Protestants; but I will soon cure you, mind that. Not so, Mr. Winkler, not so," continued he, turning to my father. My father stood with folded hands, and his eyes full of tears, looking up toward heaven, for he was much concerned on my account. Had I lived in the dark centuries the priest would soon have put an end to my freedom or my life by some kind of inquisition. Up to this time I was a good Catholic; and already in my seventh year, I had been admitted to confession.

I will here relate an occurrence that took place in my eleventh year, which will show that at that early day I had very little confidence in the power of the

priest, or the ceremonies of the Church. It was customary for our priest, once a year, to consecrate water for baptismal purposes, and this was put in a font, and was considered holy. It was my duty, as his attendant, to procure this holy water when it was wanted. On one occasion a child was to be baptized; I went for the water, and found it frozen solid. I immediately ran out to a little stream near by and got a bucket of water, took a bowl full of it to the priest and poured the rest into the font; and I have no doubt that the child baptized with the water direct from the branch fared as well, so far as baptism is concerned, as if it had been baptized with the priest's consecrated water; but woe would have been to me if the priest had found it out.

It was impressed on our minds to go to confession four times a year, till we reached the thirteenth year. Then we were admitted to the sacrament of the Lord's supper and dismissed from the day-school. In my fourteenth year I was confirmed by a bishop, and now, according to the doctrine of the Church, I was a good Christian. About this time I learned that there was a book called the Bible, and that it was highly esteemed and prized by the Protestants. Curiosity excited me to go to a Protestant neighbor, who had a son of my own age, through whose kindness I came into possession of a New Testament. I received it with the assurances of my Protestant comrade, that there was nothing in all the Bible to prove that the priest had power to forgive sins, or that we were to pray to departed saints, or call upon them for their intercessions, or that there is such a place as purgatory. I read my Protestant book from beginning to

end, two or three times, and it appeared to me to be the wrong place to find such doctrines. From that time I ceased to go to confession, as I had no faith in it.

I would here remark, however, that after I left home as a journeyman to work at my trade, I was in duty bound by the laws and regulations of our country to go to confession and to the sacrament at Easter. My employer was a strict Catholic and required it of me. A comrade and myself started for the confessional at six o'clock in the morning, but as my faith was much shaken in the doctrines of the Catholic Church I took another direction and went to the beer-house, where I staid drinking till ten; I then went to the church, when high mass was performed, and the sacrament was administered. I was now in an embarrassing condition. It was required of me to bring a printed ticket to my employer as evidence that I had been at confession and taken the sacrament. I did not dare to return home without my ticket, and how to get one I did not know. My comrade went to sacrament, and the boy whose duty it was to distribute the tickets, in a mistake gave him two; so he supplied me with one, and I went home and showed it to my employer, and every thing passed off well.

Some seven years after this, while away from home, I received a letter from an old acquaintance who had come to America some years before, in which he said much about the happiness of the people of this country, and also told me of his conversion.

This letter waked up in me strong desires to come to America. Such letters written to Germany by

many of our German Methodists are so many missionaries, and have often been the means of awakenings and conversions among those who have read them. Soon afterward my father wrote to me that many of our friends were going to America, and if I wished to go with them I might do so. When I came home I found that a day of general confession was appointed and all who wished to go were required to go to confession, and receive absolution from the priest. I refused to go because my faith had been shaken in the doctrines of the Romish Church from the time my mother died, and still more so after I had read the New Testament.

My father told me I must go to confession or he would not give me money to pay my passage to America. He was afraid that if he let me go without confession and absolution I would finally stray off from the Church. As I wanted to come to America very much, and had no other means of getting the money, I went to confession, and told the priest my doubts of his power to pardon sins. I was at the same time conscious that I was a great sinner, and deeply awakened to a sense of my lost condition, yet the priest did not point me to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, but to Virgin Mary. He considered my case a very hopeless one, and directed me to kneel for one hour on a small stick about as thick as my finger three times a day, and say a certain number of prayers to the Virgin Mary; and when I ate bread he said I must put ashes on it instead of butter or molasses. I thought after I got away from him, You may eat the ashes yourself, for I shall not.

I was then deeply sunken in sins, very wild and unrestrained, but often felt that the Spirit of God wrought powerfully in my soul. When I gave my father the parting hand and bade him farewell, the old man deeply affected thus addressed me: "My son, change your life when you get to America." These words broke up the deep of my heart, and weeping I left him and the parental home. I felt that I was a sinner, but how to be delivered from sin I did not know.

While we were crossing the ocean, we had four days and nights of dreadful storm, for we were driven too far north among the icebergs. When our ship with cargo and all on board were in great danger, our captain told us that in a few minutes we might all be in eternity. In this time of peril many of my Catholic countrymen betook themselves to their prayer-books, and the scene now appears to me like that on the ship where the prophet Jonas found himself. Then, those heathens called upon their gods to save them; these to the holy Virgin Mary, Joseph, Peter, or John. Our captain, as far as I could judge, was a praying Christian. As he looked over his company of passengers, he fell on his knees, folded his hands and looked up, praying without a book, which seemed to me most singular. While he prayed, the tears like large drops of rain rolled from his eyes. He prayed in the English language, and as I listened to him with astonishment, I could understand nothing but the name of Jesus, which in English sounds similar to the German word. I was so affected by this prayer that I trembled like a leaf. As I had more confidence in the captain's prayer than all the rest, so I resolved

to call on the captain's God. I sought a retired place, and for the first time in my life I prayed without a book. I promised God if he would bring me safe to America, to serve him with soul and body all the days of my life. Never before did I feel my sins like a heavy load upon my soul. The Lord heard our prayers, and under his protection we landed safely on the 5th of July, 1846, in the city of New York.

From this place we set out for Lawrenceburg, Indiana, and after a journey of fourteen days we arrived there in the evening. John Bittner, one of my old associates, and formerly a member of my Church, but who had now with his whole family been converted, received us kindly into his house. As we were about to retire to rest the first evening, he brought a very large book and a small one and laid them on the table. With astonishment I fixed my eyes on the large book, and it appeared to me like the old missal which I used to carry from right to left before the altar when I was a small boy in the service of the priest. Brother Bittner opened the book and read from it in the German language, when they sung a hymn out of the small book, and we then all kneeled down while brother Bittner prayed. The good man appeared to have access to the tree of life; for he called earnestly, powerfully, and mightily to the Lord. The grounds of my old faith were anew shaken to the foundation. I discovered that the large book was a German family Bible, and the small one a collection of hymns. On the next morning family worship was again attended to, and so on regularly mornings and evenings.

After a few days I changed my lodging and took

up my residence with Nicholas Hawbold, also a German Methodist, who had belonged to the Roman Catholic Church in the old father-land. Here in our beloved America he had found his blessed Savior in the pardon of his sins, and then was a class-leader in the Church. I found in my new home a loving Christian family, who proved a blessing to me. The family altar was erected and regularly surrounded, so that even at that time I formed a love for family worship, which I have retained to this day. Brother John Phetzing was then stationed preacher in Lawrenceburg. After I had heard him a few times his conference met and he was removed. In his place brother John Geyer, a true son of thunder, was appointed to the station. I also went to hear him, and as the truth had taken such deep hold upon me I made known my condition one day to one of my Catholic friends, who reproved me sharply, and told me I would soon be a fool if I did not stay away from the Methodist church. Upon this I promised that I would be blind or lame rather than go to Methodist meeting again. At the same time my Catholic friends told me that I must change my place of boarding, and not remain any longer with Mr. Hawbold, or he would soon make a crazy Methodist out of me. One of them declared to me that he had a certain flask in which he kept "Methodist drops," and that some time in the night, while I was in a deep sleep, he would come and administer me some of these drops; upon which I would be compelled to become a Methodist, and that this had already been successfully tried on a great many. I was very much alarmed at this, and for several nights I could not

sleep. If I heard the least noise in the house my fears were excited, and I imagined I saw Mr. Hawbold coming with his flask.

But to God be everlasting thanks for the precious drops of blood which the Savior shed for the pardon of my sins. As I apprehended by faith the atoning blood and appropriated it to my soul, my high-priest, Jesus Christ, forgave me all my sins. The Spirit of God witnessed with my spirit that I was a child of God, and as the atoning blood was applied to my heart I became a Methodist and a true Christian. I had hard struggles to pass through, many hinderances to overcome, and a bitter cup of penitential grief to drink before I obtained this blessing; but so much the sweeter was the oil of joy and gladness which the Lord poured in full measure into my soul. I was not willing to be converted openly, at the altar of prayer in the church, and in the presence of so many people. I sought the Savior in private by night and by day, in the woods, in my closet, and on my bed, and found him not. I prescribed for myself a mode of cure for my moral leprosy, as Naaman of old; but my heavenly Father would have me, not only truly converted, but my pride fully humbled.

On the 9th of November, 1846, after a sermon by brother Geyer, in a house full of people, upon invitation I went forward, fell on my knees before the altar of prayer, and cried aloud for mercy. The whole altar was surrounded with seeking penitents. Earnest prayers were offered up to God for them. My soul was in great distress. I felt that mercy alone could meet my case. All my righteousnesses were as filthy rags, and I could not offer my own merits,

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for what merit can a sinful and polluted soul possess? But I thank God that I could, by faith, appropriate the merit which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"And as I thus before him lay
There dawned on me a brighter day;
The darkest shadows of the night
Were followed by the morning light."

O, blessed joy! O, happy and rich comfort that I found in that hour! Four weeks after this I visited my sisters and brothers-in-law, who had purchased land a few miles from town. On my arrival at my sister's, I told what the Savior had done for me. To all this my relatives made no objection, only they said that I should not have become a Methodist, but should have remained in the bosom of the Catholic Church. At first they appeared friendly toward me, but finally they became enraged against me, and I came near suffering the fate of Stephen before the high council. But I had great liberty to confess my Savior. The protecting hand of God was over me, and so I escaped.

Soon after my conversion I felt moved to call others to repentance, and I believe God commissioned me six years before I received license from the Church to labor in his vineyard. Since I started out as a traveling preacher my Savior has been my support. At first it was a hard task, but I am still increasing in strength. I have frequently had the pleasure of seeing some of my former faith converted to God. Thousands of my countrymen are now rejoicing on earth in the love of their Savior, and many of them have already overcome through the blood of the Lamb, and are now before the throne

of God. Among them I can count my beloved father, of whose conversion I shall now give a brief account.

Soon after my conversion I became a colporteur, and went through the country distributing Bibles and talking to the people. At this my brother-in-law, who was a Roman Catholic, took offense, and wrote to my father in Germany that I had become deranged by reading the Bible, and that I was now running through the country with a Bible under my arm trying to make others like myself—that I was neglecting my family and was in a sad condition. This report excited the sympathy of my father, and he set out for America to see me. When he arrived at my brother-in-law's he wrote to me as follows: "My son, if you have so much sense left yet as to know that I am your father, and that you are my son, I have a great desire to see you." I soon started off to see him, not knowing any thing of my brother-in-law's communication to him. When I arrived at the house he looked at me with amazement, and I looked at him astonished to see him in America in his old days. He said to me, "How long is it since you began to get better?" I told him I did not know that I had been sick. He wondered to find me in my right mind, and I was glad to see him.

He afterward visited me in Ohio, and on one Sabbath went with me to one of my appointments. I prayed the Lord to help me; and while I was talking to the people my father was very much affected, and wept profusely. After meeting he asked me whether I had gone to any college in America. I took out my Bible, and showed it to him, and said to him, "This is the college I have studied in." He

was deeply awakened, and commenced seeking religion. After I was sent to Illinois, as a missionary to the Germans, my father expressed a strong desire to spend the remainder of his days with me, and started for Illinois. He was taken very sick on the way, and prayed very earnestly to God for the pardon of his sins, and the Lord heard and answered his prayer and blessed him. His Roman Catholic friends, however, sent for the priest, but before he arrived the Lord converted him. When the priest came father told him, "My High-Priest in heaven has pardoned my sins;" and soon afterward he died in peace.

My heart rejoices that I came to America, and that here I found my Savior. I am glad that the merciful God put it into the hearts of his servants of the Methodist Episcopal Church to send German missionaries among us poor scattered Germans, deeply sunken in sin, to offer to us the salvation that is in Christ. May the Lord long spare the fathers of the Church; and may we who come after continue to unfold the standard of the cross! The good leaven has already spread through the whole country; and not only here in America, but in my old father-land, in different places, is this leaven beginning to spread. May the blessing of God rest upon his servants wherever his word is preached! We may speak different languages here, but when we meet in our Father's house above, we shall all understand each other, and know even as we are known.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### EXPERIENCE OF CHARLES AUGUSTUS EMMANUEL HERTEL.

I WAS born on the 12th of January, 1824, in the city of Speier, Bavaria, Germany, when my father, George Ernst Christian Hertel, being counselor at the court of Hesse-Darmstadt, was on a journey, taking my mother with him. There I was baptized, and received the name "Charles Augustus Emmanuel;" yet had no citizenship in that place, but was brought soon afterward to Oppenheim on the Rhine, where I lived till my fifteenth year. My first religious instruction, after I could read, was from the small Lutheran catechism, portions of which I soon committed to memory. Besides this I learned many hymns, my morning and evening prayers, and heard the blessing and thanksgiving pronounced at the table, all of which made but little impression at that time upon my young but sinful heart. As I grew up, great calculations about my future existence were made and passed between father and mother, especially as I was the first-born of my father's second matrimonial estate, there being no children then living from his first wife. As he was at that time already between sixty and seventy years, he looked with more anxiety upon me, and took more pains to give me all the educational advantages that could be had in the place where we

lived. Accordingly I was sent to a private school, kept by a pastor of the Lutheran Church, a most learned man, to begin the studies of the dead and living languages, and the different branches of science. After his removal from our place I went a short time to the public school, and had, besides, a private teacher for the French language, till, at the request of several families, a theological gentleman, who had finished his course of studies in the University, and was now a candidate for the ministry, opened a private school, to which my father sent me, and where I remained till I visited the regular gymnasium or preparatory school for the University.

In the year 1835 my father was struck with paralysis on one side, but cured of it, so as to perform his duties; but in traveling every month to Darmstadt, the residence of the court, he took me along in order to do the writing for him, and to be at his command in case of sickness. On one of these occasional visits, in the month of February, 1836, I was delivered from a sudden death, or the crippling of my body, by the immediate interposition of God's providence, which I will relate here to his glory, in as few words as possible.

In this month the sinful practice of carnivals, or masked balls, is prevalent in the old country. There was then such a ball to be held in the theater of the court, which was arranged into one large ball-room. Our host, in whose hotel my father had lodged a few days every month for about seven years, had the restauration of the ball, and having a son of about my age, his wife asked permission of my father to take me along as company to their son, and received it

under the promise to take care of me. From the moment of our arrival the good lady was employed in arranging her counters with refreshments, and I was left to promenade in the saloon and to look upon the masked and foolishly-dressed persons as they came in. I took a seat on a sofa, under the private box of the Grand Duke, and being so much taken up by the costumes of the strolling persons, hardly perceived a large and very heavy ladder that was standing just before me, reaching with the top end to the box above, where several wax candles were yet to be lighted; presently, an audible voice, that seemed to come from behind, said to me, "Go away from here." Suddenly I turned and looked aside, but no person was in my immediate neighborhood, and behind me was the wall. Half frightened I rose and walked briskly away, but had not reached the other side of the stage, when I heard a tremendous crash; and, lo, that ladder had given way on the polished dancing-floor, while a man was stepping up upon it in order to light the candles, and fell with its upper end just upon the place where I had been sitting a few seconds before. The man was taken up somewhat injured, so far as I can recollect, and I was saved by God's especial care over me.

On the 26th of January, 1837, my father died suddenly from apoplexy, when I was thirteen years old, and with this sad event many of my worldly prospects were blasted. Shortly before his death he gave each of his children a copy of the Holy Bible, except my youngest sister, who was only nine months old when he left this earthly tabernacle. He himself read this book not only at daytime, but almost every night, and we generally found it in the morning lying

on the table in the sitting-room when we came in. I often saw him stand before the window praying; and I can never forget his folded hands, and silvery locks, and raised head, looking up toward heaven and sighing to God ardently also for me. This made a deep impression upon my mind, and it has never left me.

In the year 1838 I was confirmed, having had three stated ministers of the Lutheran Church for catechisers and religious instructors; but none of these three so-called theologians told me of my sins, or that I must be born again by the Spirit of God. On the first day of Pentecost, that is on Sunday, after a mere recitation of the catechism, I was with a number of other boys and girls confirmed; and, on the next day, we were at the regular annual dancing and other worldly amusements of the place, that were held in a beautiful little grove, about a mile from Oppenheim. Here we sported in honor of Bacchus and other gods, not much better than the heathen, shouting for joy on account of being free now from the hard yoke of learning and studying the doctrines and principles of our religion. In the same summer I was saved from an early death and a watery grave, on a bathing occasion of our private school in the river Rhine, by the strong hand and active swimming of our teacher, Dr. Frederic Eich, now Professor of Languages in the Gymnasium at Worms. Thanks to him, and glory to God, who gave him power to swim after me and rescue me just at the moment of my third and last rising from the depth of the river!

The time had now arrived for me to go to a higher school, and accordingly I was sent from home to the Gymnasium of Darmstadt, in the spring session of

1839; but, the next year, I went into the first regiment of infantry, having the personal promise of the present Grand Duke, Ludwig III, that he would help me forward. About eighteen months after that, the good Lord led me away; wherefore I ever will praise him, for his word is better than that of princes; but time and space allow me not to detail here the ways of his gracious Providence. What should I do now? Well, I had always from my youth a desire to study medicine and to become a physician, or an officer in the army. As this last was now made void, I accordingly went to the University and enrolled myself as licentiate of Veterinary Surgery, not being allowed to enter the regular Medical Department, because I had not completed the course of study in the Gymnasium. But this is in Germany a very good, highly-esteemed, and by the state sanctioned, profession; and a young man is required to study three years before he can graduate.

Here was my religion totally at an end, and no wonder; for I arrived at the city on Sunday morning, went first to a former schoolmate of mine, *a student of theology*, and after dinner he said to me with a very serious face: "Now, come with me and I will show you right away where we get the best—beer!" Accordingly he led me to the so-called "Crooked Goose." After a year had elapsed my mother found that she could not provide me with means to finish my studies, because we were under the Code Napoleon. I therefore went home and worked with a house-carpenter for one summer and fall; and, in the winter of 1844, I visited an architectural school in order to pass an examination the next spring. But I was not admitted

to it, because a great number of young men had already passed it and could not be engaged. On the 14th of November, 1845, my good mother died; but I confidently expect to see her with father in heaven. Now my three sisters were scattered, and I left alone, so to speak, with my cousin, a butcher, who afterward held a liquor-house, where I acted as bar-keeper till 1846, when I went to my old teacher in Worms to study Book-Keeping and Commercial Arithmetic. In the fall of this year I obtained a very good situation as clerk in a large lumber business and a wine cellar. Up to this time I had hardly been in a church half a dozen times, but lived a very wicked life in Sabbath-breaking and drinking especially; my Bible, that I had received from my dear father, I gave away, and did not care any thing about God or religion; in fact, I heard nothing of it. Cursing and swearing I learned in the army in my sixteenth year; drinking and fighting in the University; mocking at sin and blaspheming God in the bar-room, and so I came pretty near being a desperado. I left my last place in 1847, with the intention to go to America, but before this point was gained I had seen many a hard day and many a sleepless night, and sometimes the devil urged me mightily to commit suicide. I became poor, wretched, forsaken of friends, robbed of all my means and clothing, without shelter or a resting-place, when God alone told me one day, it was I believe on the twenty-second of December, 1847, at four o'clock, P. M., before the city of Darmstadt, "Go to thy sister." She was sixty-three miles off, but away I started on foot, and marched the whole distance, till next day at six o'clock, P. M., resting but three times.

There I staid with her parents-in-law, for she was now married, and on the 16th of August, 1848, she, her husband, brother Hermann Brück, and myself started for America. My sister had loaned me the money to come here. We reached safely the city of New York, on the 5th of October, having no particular friends or a knowledge of the English language, and were sometimes in great trials and distress, without knowing or feeling that God himself was indeed our friend, and had already for years been preparing the way for a most happy future in communion with him. By and by he led us into the neighborhood of the First German Methodist Episcopal Church, in Second-street, New York; and, in the month of December, it so happened that out of curiosity we went to hear Methodist preaching and to see those "peculiar people," the Methodists, of whom we had often heard very singular and often bad things.

The first preacher I heard was old father Tiemann, a local preacher; but under the preaching and indefatigable labors of the Rev. C. H. Doering, I was convinced of my dreadful, sinful state, as well by nature as by practice, and after many an inward struggle and wrestling with Jesus, the sinner's friend, I was enabled to believe on him for forgiveness of all my past sins, and regeneration of my wicked heart, becoming a new creature in him who loved me and washed me in his own blood. This event, changing my whole inward and outward life, took place in the month of January, 1849; and about the same time I joined the Church on probation.

It was but a short time after my conversion that I, never dreaming or feeling any desire before, but

rather a dislike to become a minister of the Gospel, now felt a singular movement in my soul or spirit to do something for God more particular than a general Christian life required. It was neither a wish, nor a desire, neither a self-created and nourished thought, nor an ambitious aim of standing in the pulpit in order to talk merely to the people, nor was it a feeling pride to be somebody and to shine in the world, although I had many such desires in former years. It was, if I should describe it as nearly as possible, a singular influence upon my spirit, sometimes moving mightily the feelings of my heart with joy or fear toward God and men, different from those feelings of joyful gratitude, or fearful love, arising from the knowledge of my own conversion and the responsibility therewith upon me enjoined for remaining faithful and steadfast; sometimes inspiring my mind with the great as well as awful and lovely truths of the Gospel, and chasing thought after thought, making me, *nolens volens*, preach at any place where I was, that is silently. It was a deep impression, but not always equally clear and forcible, varying according to my own thinking and reasoning about it, that I should lead sinners to Christ; wherefore I went around to see my friends, and to talk to them about God and their salvation.

One night I went up to brother Doering's room to give instructions to his niece in the German language, and on that occasion I told him I believed I should do something in the vineyard of the Lord. His short but only answer was, "Well, make it a subject of prayer." He never gave me more encouragement, and I am now very glad of it. I was willing already to go at

any time and to any place of the world; but God had to prepare me first for the practical part of the pastoral work, and therefore he led me in his infallible wisdom along a very hard, but a very good way. I was taken sick in the month of April, 1849, with typhus fever, in the month of June with an attack of the cholera that was prevailing so much at that time, and in July I was taken down with dysentery and a cramp hiccough, that kept me for seven days and nights almost strangling. In these states of disease I was greatly prostrated, but wonderfully strengthened in the spiritual man. I saw scenes which I never had seen before; for not only the different preachers of the city and vicinity came, spoke to me about my soul's salvation, and prayed at my bedside with me, but also the members of the Church, male and female, were all preaching to and praying with me; so that I was daily kept before the throne of grace in open and silent prayer, and God in his great mercy heard these prayers, and not only saved me from bodily death, but made me a pastor in his own school.

My present wife had arrived from Germany as a Roman Catholic on the 19th of June, of that year. She saw me in this sorrowful, but to me blessed, condition. She was humbled and converted. On the 2d of September we were joined in holy matrimony by brother Doering, in whose house I lived from the beginning of the year, and where I remained till he went to Germany. God also destroyed by these humiliations my business career, in order to take care of me himself. After six months of probation I was admitted into full membership. Shortly after that

I was licensed to exhort, and in a few weeks I received license to preach. On the 26th of January, 1850, the very day on which, thirteen years previously, my best earthly hopes were thrown aside by the death of my father, I was sent out to travel under the presiding elder, and directed to Rev. John Swahlen to supply our German mission in Newark, New Jersey, and alternately to help at the Washington-Street mission in New York. This was something of a hard beginning on account of the state of the society in Newark.

In the month of May, 1850, I was sent to Brooklyn, New York, after joining the New York conference as a traveling preacher on probation. Brother Doering went on his mission to Germany, and Rev. Casper Jost, from Quincy, Illinois, was appointed to Second-Street, in New York, but did not arrive till the end of August. Therefore, Rev. John C. Lyon, presiding elder, took me away from Brooklyn to supply the old mother Church, where I had been converted, and from whence I had been sent out. This was a trying arrangement for as young a minister as I was; yet God helped me, as I was resolved to be wholly sanctified unto him. My first sermon for the next day—Sunday morning—was founded upon the words, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Glory to him who is worthy of all glory alone!

After brother Jost had arrived, I was called to take charge of our mission in Albany and Troy, New York. This was a new and a hard trial for me, but I went in the fear of God. Besides, I had the supervision over Schenectady. In the month of May,

1851, the Bishop sent me to Poughkeepsie, where the preacher had been dropped, because he could not pass his examination at the conference. This was a most trying appointment, for he labored against us, and half of my members were with him; but about four months afterward they were scattered, and we had peace and prosperity. At the next session I was appointed to Poughkeepsie circuit, embracing one hundred and thirty-five miles to travel; and I had the supervision of Calicoon circuit, which made one hundred and seventy miles around. I moved three times with my family and lost my horse on the road.

In the year 1853, when our conference was held at Kingston, I was appointed to Buffalo, about five hundred miles north, with the supervision of Buffalo circuit, where a younger man named Kurtz had to go. The following year I remained, but received brother William Buettner to this circuit. There I had two blessed years, and many found the Lord. Several new preaching-places were established that are now good missions with good churches in them.

When the year 1855 came round I was appointed to Rochester, where God blessed me richly and abundantly, and many souls were converted to God. From May, 1857, to 1858, I labored in the old mission in New York, and that year was the great revival time, of which we also had our blessed share. Now I am here in San Francisco, California, and praise the Lord for what he has done for such an unworthy man as I am. But I am resolved to spend my life in the service of the Lord forever.

I wish to say that all my sisters and their husbands are children of God and members of the Methodist

Episcopal Church. One of them, also, is a missionary in the Rock River conference. God made me the instrument of bringing two of my sisters to Christ when we were in Poughkeepsie; and my prayer is that we may all meet at the right hand of God, where we shall relate better things of the mercy and grace of the Lord than we can do it here with pen and ink.

# CHAPTER XXIV.

## GEORGE ANDRE—FREDERIC KOPP—HENRY HENKE.

### EXPERIENCE OF GEORGE ANDRE.

On the 11th of December, in the year 1846, after a sea-voyage of eleven weeks, I saw for the first time this happy and free America; and on the following day I was permitted to step on shore in a land which secured to me political and religious liberty, and which, through the boundless mercy and long-suffering of God, has become the land of my spiritual birth. It was not a desire to gain riches that induced me, a youth of only sixteen years, to come to this country; but the love of liberty and affection for my parents and friends, from whom I could not bear to be separated.

The place of our landing was New Orleans, where we did not remain long, as we soon set out for Louisville, the place of our destination. Here, for some time, I visited the Lutheran Church, whose preacher had himself neither true godliness nor took the least pains to preach it to others in his Church. He was in the habit of reading his sermons, of which, as he told me, he had a stock on hand that would last him two years, and when that time was out he would commence at the first again. When he made his pastoral visits he would by no means refuse a dram of whisky, and

would take something better if he could get it. Such a course of conduct I could not approve of; and seeking further for a spiritual guide, I was drawn into associations which led me into the fearful vortex of infidelity.

In the commencement of my infidel life I was glad to have made the discovery that there were such plausible grounds against the Bible. I began in good earnest and with great zeal to fortify myself in my new principles, in order to counteract the numerous doubts and fears that arose within me in reference to the truths of my new discovery. The satisfaction I derived from my false theories was of short duration. I was compelled to weigh one of my principles after another in the scale of reason; and I thank God that I was not so far blinded by prejudice that I could not give an unbiased judgment, as far, at least, as an unconverted man can judge correctly in these matters. I now could not mingle in the Bacchanalian revels of the free-thinkers, not because I was too good, but too proud to lead an immoral life. My poor soul was like a helpless ship, among the reefs of a rock-bound coast. At times the wind appeared to drive it to the embraces of my blessed Savior, then again the storm threatened to drive it upon the rocks of destruction. In this way my mind was agitated by day and my repose was disturbed by night. I wanted to pray, but how was a poor sinner to pray? Hear it: "If there be a God, then may he lead me in the right way! Amen." This was about all I could say. Yet, blessed be his name! there is a God and he did lead me in the right way.

About this time, when my mind was so much

agitated on the subject of religion, there was in the place where I lived a young man, a clerk in a store, who sought my acquaintance and society. This he could the more easily gain, as I was at the same time also seeking a friend with whom to associate. Before long, we could be seen at the close of the day's labor in our pleasure walks; and my new friend in a short time began to recommend to me true religion, the possession of which had made him happy. One evening he took me to visit one of his friends, a pious old gentleman. The conversation was turned upon the Bible, and religion, yet with all my doubts and skeptical views in reference to religion, I had too much respect to tell the old gray-headed man that I did not believe in the Bible. I thought I could easily manage him; but he soon nailed me fast, striking blow after blow with his propositions which were so simple and powerful. He proved the Bible true by the Bible itself, and deeply impressed the truth into my mind that it was the word of God. This good old man, by the name of Vetter, has pointed many a wayward wanderer to his Father's house.

Previous to this I had already occasionally visited the Methodist Church, but then I went to mock; now I went to pray. My family did every thing in their power to keep me away from the meetings, yet all in vain, for I went again and again seeking the Lord, if he would receive and take home a prodigal son. It appeared at first as though he would not. I visited all the prayer meetings and was often at the altar of prayer, and could indeed say with the Psalmist, "My bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long." From my appearance I seemed to become ten

years older in a few weeks. Finally, after the most fearful night, which I passed with anxious struggles, when I arose to perform my morning devotions, the blessed Savior spoke peace to my desponding heart. As the natural sun threw its first beams into my room the Sun of righteousness arose upon my poor heart. I shouted, I praised God, I leaped for joy. All things had become new within and without; I understood the Psalmist when he spoke of the trees clapping their hands, and the mountains skipping like lambs. My store was too small for me: I thought I must declare to the world the salvation which is in Christ. This was the 17th of December, 1847. On the 3d of January, 1848, I joined the Methodist Church, through the members of which I had come to a knowledge of the truth.

I soon had strong impressions to go out as a missionary to preach the Gospel to my countrymen, to which brothers Kisling and Danker encouraged me. But business relations made it impossible for me to devote myself to this work. From Louisville I moved to Burlington, Iowa, where for a number of years I endeavored to make myself useful as a local preacher; till, finally compelled by the reproofs of my conscience, I vowed to God to follow the first opening of the way to devote myself wholly to the service of his Church.

I did not have to wait long. The way was soon opened, and notwithstanding I had a lucrative business, I followed the directions of Providence and the call of the Church; and on the 24th of October, I, with the faithful companion of my life, left home and friends, beloved parents, and a lovely society, with

whom we had been bound in the bond of Christian fellowship, and started for Bloomington, Illinois, as an itinerant preacher of the Methodist Church. Here I labored two years, and have reason to thank God my labor was not in vain. The Lord owned his word, and raised up a goodly number of spiritual children.

As I am concluding this brief sketch, I thank my merciful heavenly Father for all his providence, grace, and mercy; and with joy I raise mine Ebenezer, "Hitherto the Lord had helped me."

### EXPERIENCE OF FREDERIC KOPP.

Mergelstetten, at the foot of the Alps in the Swabian land, is the place where I first saw the light of life, on the 16th of September, 1827 My parents were members of the Lutheran Church, and believed in religion as it had been handed down to them from their fathers, but without having any experience of a change of heart. They regularly read their morning and evening prayers, and went twice to Church every Sabbath, and without exception made their children go with them. It is no uncommon thing in my native country for families to get into quarrels, and curse and swear at each other before and after reading their morning and evening prayers.

In such a condition I lived with my parents and six children till the year 1846. Three years before this some young men from our neighborhood went to America, and wrote back beautiful and interesting letters, about the advantages and glory of the New World, the independence and happiness of its inhabitants, and the good fortune of all who went there. These letters excited many, and especially my two

older sisters and myself, to go to America, and we begged and entreated our parents night and day to emigrate to the land of freedom. I know not what so especially excited me to go. Of liberty I then had no proper conception; riches I did not want; but there was an inexpressible longing desire that drew me to America. I can now see that a gracious Providence led us out, not only to give us political, but also spiritual liberty, and to save us from eternal death.

On the 24th of August, 1846, our ship landed at the harbor in New York; and how delighted we were, on approaching the city, to see the beautiful country, with its green hills and elegant shrubbery, its rural cottages and well-cultivated gardens! The city did not interest us much, as we were common country folks, and could scarcely find our way through the bustle and confusion. Our aim was to procure a piece of land where we might apply our energies, and live in our own cottage, and eat the products of our own labors, free from anxious care. We accordingly settled in the then new and flourishing territory of Wisconsin. Here we went to work and felled the tall trees, as fast as possible, to clear our ground; and on the following harvest we had raised enough to supply our wants. We lived two years without seeing a preacher, or any one who cared for our souls. There was no converted person in the neighborhood, and we generally spent Sunday in hunting and sporting; but in this I did not find much pleasure, and there was no day so long to me as the Sabbath.

In the fall of 1848 we heard, to our great joy, that a German preacher was to conduct religious services

in the house of my brother-in-law. The whole neighborhood, old and young, assembled on the occasion, so that the house could not contain them all. The man gave us an excellent sermon, and I remarked to a neighbor of ours that he preached differently, and more earnestly than our ministers in Germany. "O," said he, "you only think so because we have not heard preaching for so long a time." The next appointment was made for that day three weeks; at which time the preacher took for his text these words, "One thing is needful;" and it appeared to me that I had never before heard what was needful for me. A certain restlessness was excited within me, and I now saw, for the first time in my life, that religion did not consist alone in outward ceremonies, but must dwell in the heart. Up to this time we did not know what kind of preacher this was; but as my sister, who was living in Milwaukie, and who had there been awakened and converted under Methodist preaching, in a visit to us, told us a great many things about the Methodists, we were quite certain that this man must be a Methodist preacher, and so he proved.

Through the love and kindness of our English brethren of the Methodist Church there was a missionary sent to us lost sheep, who was the first to blow the Gospel trumpet in those regions; and many of us, too, for the first time in our lives, heard the Gospel from a man who had experienced in his own heart that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to all them that believe. Soon after this the sacrament of the Lord's supper was administered, and the presiding elder, brother Eisenmeier, was present. He preached with power, and produced more deep

impressions upon my mind than any man had ever done. My conscience was waked up, and many others were convinced that they must be converted. I now had a great desire for mercy and pardon, but was ignorant of the way, and thought I could only expect acceptance with God when I had made myself better. In this condition I lived nearly a whole year; sometimes I thought I was converted, and then my sins would rise again, and my courage failed, and I also yet clung to the world. On this account I did not obtain the full rest of the soul. But with all this I daily searched the Scriptures and other good books, read a great deal, and also commenced praying in the family, as my father was now dead, and I was the oldest of the children.

In the year 1849 I felt in my heart that an entire surrender was demanded of me, and that it was especially my duty to join the Church, which up to this time I had neglected to do. On the 26th of December my mother and myself, with two more of our family, joined the Church, and this was a great blessing to me. We had already established a Sabbath school, in which I took an active part, and instructed the larger children. I was soon appointed class-leader, and with what little grace I had I improved my talent, so that the Lord constantly added a little more, and in the fall of the next year it fell to my lot to enter upon my first field of labor as a missionary to the Germans. Within me I felt a great love for my countrymen; and after I was licensed to exhort, I often went on foot, from seven to twelve miles and back the same day, in order to encourage my countrymen to seek the Lord; but to go out as

preacher, with my limited knowledge and experience, I thought was too much for me. I asked for time to prepare myself better for the work, but the word was, "Say not I am too young, but go whither thou art sent." The men for the work were scarce, and the field was large.

Owing to my youth and inexperience in the work, I might have taken some wrong steps that would have resulted in evil to myself and been injurious to the cause; and, from my own experience, I was fully convinced of the importance of sending young men with older and more experienced ones to counsel and instruct them in the duties and work of the ministry. Yet with all my youth and inexperience in the work, the Lord blessed us, and a number of souls were converted. The next year I was sent as missionary to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Since that time I have been laboring in different fields, and I am now in Burlington, Iowa. In this city, as well as in all my other fields of labor, I have found many Germans, a large number of whom were prejudiced against us, because the Roman Catholics, as well as Lutherans, believe that the Churches to which they belong are the only true Churches, and to join any other would be falling from the true faith. But the Gospel which we preach soon teaches them a better way, and many who, in their blindness, like Saul, had persecuted the people of God, are converted, and become zealous defenders of his cause. Especially can we do much among the children by our Sunday schools, and to this object our excellent Sunday school books contribute much.

When I look back upon my past ministry, and think of the number of Sunday schools I have been

instrumental in forming, I am led to exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." I heartily thank God that I am a citizen of the freest and happiest land on the earth, and that he has made me free from the bondage of sin, the power of the devil, and the fear of death. I further thank him that I am a member of the Methodist Church, which taketh care of her youth as a mother careth for her children, and so richly supplies them with the sincere milk of the word, and seeks to raise them up to the fullness of the stature of men in Christ Jesus. Especially do I thank God that he has counted me worthy to declare the riches of his grace to sinners far and near. Notwithstanding some complain of the hardships of the itinerant preacher's life, I do not, and shall not, complain; and although we have sometimes hard fare and a small support, yet when the treasures of the rich shall pass away, and this world shall be consumed by the fires of the judgment-day, then the Judge shall say to those who have labored in his vineyard, "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me." May the Lord God of all grace keep me, and all his followers, faithful to the end, and establish his kingdom in all lands!

### EXPERIENCE OF HENRY HENKE.

I was born of Lutheran parents, and brought up in the doctrines of their Church, and was, according to custom, by confirmation at a suitable age, identified with the Church. Though in my early days I had a longing desire for spiritual food, yet I was without power, and had no one to direct me where I could find peace to my soul.

Since the Lord gave the light of his grace to shine into my heart, I have often thought back upon my past life, but I can not recollect that I was ever instructed in the doctrine of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ for the pardon of sins. I was early convinced that the restraining grace of God often worked in my heart, directing and protecting me when the enemy of my soul sought to destroy me. As I advanced in years I increased in wickedness; yet the merciful Savior did not withdraw his eye of compassion from me.

In my youthful days I was passionately fond of playing and dancing, and often returned to my home at the dawn of the morning; but this was frequently not so tormenting to my conscience as when I returned home at midnight; for when I laid me down to sleep, in the darkness of the night, my conscience would wake up and reproach me for my folly. Under its reproofs I often wept, and promised to forsake my follies, but I lacked the power to do so, and had not been instructed to turn to the Savior, who alone could help me. Thus I would keep my promise to do better, only till the next temptation to do evil; and this was never later than the following Sabbath.

Under these circumstances two important objects were impressed upon my mind; either to devote myself to the military service, or to go to America. In this unsettled state I spent several years, till finally I was received into the military service. I soon became dissatisfied with my situation, and then thoughts of emigrating to America were again so strongly impressed upon my mind that I spared neither pains nor money to gain my release from military service.

When, on the 25th of June, 1836, I succeeded in obtaining it, I immediately made my arrangements to go; and on the 26th of the same month I left my parental home to come to America. In the good providence of God I arrived at Wheeling, Virginia, on the 8th of October in the same year. Here I lived partly contented, and had not the opportunities to follow my inclination to sin.

In 1838 the Lord led brother Swahlen to Wheeling, and began to manifest his power in the awakening and conversion of a number of souls, among whom were some of my friends. They labored with me, but to all outward appearance without effect. They could not induce me to attend their meetings, though I finally commenced praying in secret to God, asking him, if I was right not to allow others to deceive me, but if I was wrong to lead me to the right way. On Sunday, the 24th of February, 1839, I subscribed myself anew to the Lutheran Church. Through the week my brother-in-law sought to persuade me to go to his church, which I however refused to do. On Sunday morning his wife came to invite me, but I again refused; my dear wife then urged me to go to the Methodist meeting, and said we could go this once, and on the next Sunday we could attend the Lutheran church again. I at length consented to go. When I came to the church I kneeled down and prayed that God should lead me in the right way. I found nothing to object to and nothing to convince me that I was wrong. In the afternoon I went to class, and in the evening to preaching again without much effect upon my mind. At the close of the sermon brother Swahlen gave an invitation for penitents to come to the

altar of prayer, and under this invitation the Spirit of God powerfully affected my heart. Through the grace of God I accepted the invitation, and kneeled at the altar to call on the name of the Lord. My prayer was heard, a new song was put into my mouth, even praise to God; and I was now not ashamed to be called a Methodist. On the same evening, March 3, 1839, I joined the Church. The following Monday, as one of the leading members of the Lutheran Church went out to collect for their preacher, I paid him my subscription, and requested that my name be taken from their Church-book.

I then felt a deep interest for the cause of God, and the first year of my membership I became class-leader, steward, and trustee. In the third year it was suggested to me by my preacher, Rev. C. C. Best, that I might be useful if I would devote myself to the service of the Church and the preaching of the Gospel. I replied that I could not accept this sacred office. After this strange thoughts passed through my mind. I became restless, and committed the matter in prayer to God, thinking that if he wanted me in his vineyard he would open the way for me to go into the work. Thus several years passed away, but my desire to labor for God increased. I was licensed to exhort and soon afterward to preach; and, in a short time, my mind became so strangely impressed with my duty to go out and labor for souls, that I could scarcely restrain myself. When I mentioned the matter to my wife she made objections to my going, and asked me whether I would ruin my family, and said that if I went she would not go with me. I was tempted to give up the idea of going, but my con-

science was not quieted long, and I had such inward conflicts that I felt it was a solemn mockery for me to pray the Lord to revive his work, and at the same time to be unwilling to labor for his cause.

When I resolved to go in spite of all difficulties I felt joyful; when I refused again I became gloomy and sorrowful. When the brethren in the quarterly conference gave me a recommendation to the annual conference, I told brother Doering not to rely on me till they heard from me at conference, and committed myself to the Lord in prayer. My dear wife, however, was unmoved till the time came for me to write to the conference, and then I asked her what I should write. She answered, weeping, "Write as you please." I reported my case to brother Doering, and told him that I would go. I received my appointment for Malaga, and went with my family to my appointed field of labor, and commenced in weakness, but with joy, to labor. My prayer was that the Lord would grant me much grace to be useful in his vineyard, and bring many immortal souls to the knowledge of the truth. I thank God that he has inclined the heart of my wife to go with me to this work, so that now instead of complaining she prays that the Lord may make me useful.

Blessed be God and our Savior Jesus Christ, for his love which I enjoy with mine. May the Lord bring many precious souls to a knowledge of himself!

# CHAPTER XXV

## JOHN SCHMIDT—HENRY KOLBE—GEORGE BOESHENZ.

### EXPERIENCE OF JOHN SCHMIDT.

In the year 1838, as many of my relations and acquaintances had determined to go to America, I too, although only in my sixteenth year, desired to become an emigrant to the New World. As I was the only child, there was very little prospect that my parents would allow me to go alone. They themselves, especially my father, had not the most distant idea of emigrating, inasmuch as they had a competence for their subsistence in their father-land. Yet He who controls the hearts of men by his gracious providence, so overruled our affairs that, to my great joy, my parents rather than see me go alone were willing also to go to America. Arrangements were made to sell house, vineyard, land, and all; and in the spring of 1839 we started on our journey. On the 15th of May, with many tears and the good wishes of our friends, we bade farewell to our old home; and, on the 7th of September, in the same year, we, for the first time, set foot on American soil. As it was not our object to remain in a large city, in a few days after our landing we went country-wards, and settled in one of the most beautiful villages of Pennsylvania. Scarcely had we become rested from our long journey when

my father was taken sick, and in one month from our arrival in America he died. Yet God, who knoweth the heart of the stranger, manifested himself to us as a friend and a helper in our time of need.

When I left my home I was a member of the Lutheran Church, but I was a stranger to experimental godliness. God, in a wonderful manner, awakened me while we were on board the ship at sea, to see my sinful and lost condition, and to show me that I must be born again. But how or in what manner this was to be accomplished I did not know. I had no one to give me instruction, or lead me in the way to the Savior. I felt sorrowful and cast down, and frequently sought to conceal my feelings, but in vain; I finally came to the delusive thought that I would feel better if I were to go to some other part of the country, or to some other city. Accordingly I bade my mother farewell, and set out afoot on my journey over the Alleghany Mountains, for Pittsburg; but a strange feeling still seemed to urge me on. Restless and discontented I left Pittsburg and came down the Ohio river to Cincinnati, and from thence I went to Louisville, and still on to St. Louis, then up the Mississippi till I reached the borders of Minnesota. But even there I did not find my long-sought rest. Accordingly I descended the river till I came to New Orleans, and reached there just at the time when Rev. P. Schmucker, one of the first German missionaries, was establishing a German mission in that city. I was earnestly seeking rest for my heavy-laden soul, but here too I was disappointed, for I did not seek in the right way nor turn my attention to the right object.

Finally, after wandering for a long time in the mazes of error, and feeling sin's disease preying upon me, I concluded to go to my mother again, and came up the Mississippi. On my way from New Orleans to Louisville I became acquainted with two men, the one a Jew and the other a Roman Catholic. They urged me strongly to tarry some days in Louisville, where they also lived. A gracious providence so ordered it that I obtained a home in a Christian family. There were several other young men boarding at the same place. Here I saw many things that I liked very much. A blessing was asked at the table and prayer was had in the family every morning and evening. Every member of the family treated me with the utmost kindness, and the young men manifested a deep interest in my welfare, so that I felt myself at once quite at home with them. They took me with them to church, and also here I was well satisfied. The word of God, which I had not heard for several years in the German language, deeply penetrated my heart, and I constantly saw more clearly how and in what way I was to be delivered from the burden of my sins; namely, that I must give up my hope founded on baptism and confirmation and receive Christ and his merits by faith alone.

It was well for me that I did not know this kind family were Methodists when I first took up my residence with them, for already in Pennsylvania I had been warned against the Methodists, and heard many things said against them. I was, therefore, much astonished and somewhat alarmed when I heard one day that these people were Methodists. Yet I was convinced that they were good people, let others

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say of them what they would; and I knew that by their kindness to me they sought my welfare, for I never had been treated so kindly by any from the day that I had left my home. By their love they gained me, and on Easter-day, in the year 1842, I cast in my lot with the despised Methodists, and in the fall of the same year, at a camp meeting near New Albany, in Indiana, the Lord permitted me to find my long-sought treasure, and spoke peace to my soul. Now the clouds of error and darkness passed away. The happiness for which I had long been seeking I now possessed. My mother at first was deeply grieved on account of the course I had taken—for she felt distressed that her only child should fall from the faith of our fathers; but afterward, when she came to me, she took the same course, became a Methodist, and lived a faithful member of the Church during the remainder of her life. She died in the triumphs of faith, and has gone to her reward in heaven.

Soon after my conversion I felt strongly moved to preach the Gospel, but I felt that the lot of a Methodist preacher—to be poor and neglected—was a hard one. I therefore avoided every offer to do something in the way of talking to the people, and where I could not avoid being called upon I often excused myself against my own conscience. Besides this I believed that if the Lord had called me to preach he would find ways and means to put me into the ministry without my putting myself forward, and that if it must be so that I shall go out and preach the Gospel I will have this comfort, that I did not urge myself forward. I changed my residence to

Burlington, Iowa, at the time when Rev. L. S. Jacoby was presiding elder on Quincy district, to which Burlington then belonged, and thought myself in the most safe condition; but a door was opened for me into the ministry, which I could not refuse to enter.

When brother Nast heard that I had gone to Burlington he recommended me to brother Jacoby, who was the right man to bring me into the work. The Lord, also, in his good providence, so changed my affairs in other respects that in the fall of 1848, with a reliance upon the promise of God and his grace, I started out to preach the Gospel. I have had some hard and toilsome fields during the past ten years while I have been laboring in the vineyard of the Lord; but hitherto the Lord hath helped me. I thank him that he has counted me worthy and made me willing to enter upon his service as a minister of his word.

### EXPERIENCE OF HENRY KOLBE.

On the 19th of September, in the year 1851, I first set my feet on American soil, and soon after landing, I, with another young man, came to Cincinnati, Ohio, where I had some relatives living. After a long search I found them, and was very much surprised and disappointed when I learned that both my uncles were members of the German Methodist Church. I was strongly inclined to infidelity, and in my heart an enemy to the religion of Jesus Christ. I had already denounced the course which the Methodist Episcopal Church had taken in sending her missionaries to Germany, and therefore despised and pitied my relatives, who, as I thought, had been misled by

them, and could hardly make up my mind to associate with them. But as I considered myself firmly grounded in my unbelief, I had no fears of being shaken in my principles or misled by the Methodists.

Soon after my arrival here a friend of mine invited me one Sunday to go with him to Wesley Chapel. After some little objections I concluded to go. The earnestness of the preacher, the solemn stillness of the large congregation, interrupted occasionally by a hearty amen, the melodious singing, pouring out from hearts that seemed to feel what they sung, all this—although I did not understand a word of it—impressed me favorably. Early on the following Sunday my friend came to me again, and requested me to take a walk with him. I thought he intended to take me out to show me the curiosities of the city. On our walk he stopped in front of the Buckeye-Street German Methodist church, and told me he was going in to attend the meeting, and asked me if I would not come in too. I was not sure that I could find the way back to my boarding-house, as I was a stranger in the city; and accordingly, though with some reluctance, I went into the church with him. This was the first time I had ever been in a German Methodist church. It was on the first Sabbath in November, in the year 1851. Instead of being dissatisfied I was interested in the religious exercises, and from that time forward visited the church twice every Sunday, and gradually felt a change going on within me. I began to entertain serious doubts about the truth of my infidel principles, and lost my relish for the sinful amusements to which I had been attached.

I began to search the Scriptures with diligence and care, and prayed to God to lead me in the right way. The more I searched, the more my doubts increased. I now had no rest, day nor night, and the thoughts of meeting a holy and a righteous God, with all my sins upon me, and of being eternally separated from the object of all good—all this caused me to fear and tremble.

In this condition I visited a preacher of the German Reformed Church, and obtained his permission to attend the sacrament of the Lord's supper, but neither during preaching nor at the communion table did I find rest to my soul.

More depressed than ever I went on Christmas night to the German Methodist church on Race-street. The word preached sank deeply into my heart; I thought these are the people of God; my love toward them increased, and the same evening I joined the Church. I longed for the evidence that Christ was formed in my heart the hope of glory, and I was determined not to give up seeking till I had the witness that my name was written in the book of life.

I went to the altar of prayer every time an invitation was given; and about the middle of January, 1852, it pleased God to draw me out of the horrible pit and to set my feet on the Rock of Ages. It is out of my power to describe the happiness that I enjoyed then. I had such a clear witness of my conversion that I have never doubted the reality of it.

Shortly after, I left Cincinnati and moved to St. Mary's, Ohio, where I lived nine months. I here felt quite lonely, as there was no German society of the Methodist Church here; but I found a great many of

my old companions in unbelief. I pitied them, and wished that I could be a help to them, and show them how glorious is the way of salvation. In order to do something for their eternal welfare, I went from house to house, distributing tracts. I also established a Sunday school, and engaged as many of my countrymen in it as I could.

Rev. Ralph Wilcox, who was at that time pastor of the Methodist congregation, encouraged me to preach to the Germans, which I did, but only for a short time. Rev. Dr. Nast also pointed out my duty to me; but I never thought that I could be useful as a laborer in the Lord's vineyard. In October, 1852, I moved to Defiance, Ohio. The first time I met Rev. P. B. Bäcker, preacher in charge, he told me that I must go to the conference with him the next fall. This was quite unexpected to me, because to avoid preaching was just the reason that I left St. Mary's, and now there seemed to be no escape. I was often requested to accept license as exhorter, but I would in nowise consent to it. But God has ways and means to direct our steps. Once, when I was riding on horseback, the horse ran away with me, while my right foot stuck fast in the stirrup. Amid the most intense pains I promised God to obey him if he would keep me from becoming a cripple. I put several questions to myself, as, Is it perhaps pride, or a desire for a comfortable life and honor? My answer was that the Methodist preachers had the least cause for being proud, and that they enjoyed little rest and comfort, and that they could easily bear their honor. But what troubled me the most were the words of the Lord to Ezekiel, chapter iii, 17, 18. It was terrible to me that the

blood of each soul that might be lost on my account should be required of me. I resolved now to try it one year, and accepted license as an exhorter, and was astonished to find that my mind was greatly relieved of a heavy burden, and peace and happiness took possession of my soul.

In 1853 the quarterly conference of Defiance mission, North Indiana district, gave me license to preach, and recommended me to the South-Eastern Indiana conference. At the close of the first year I told my presiding elder that, according to my promise, I had tried now one year, and should like to be dismissed, but he would not consent to it.

After preaching for five years in Indiana, the state of my health required a change of country, and I consequently selected Minnesota. I am praying to God continually that he may give me grace and strength to discharge my duties faithfully, that, after preaching to others, I myself may not become a castaway.

### EXPERIENCE OF GEORGE BOESHENZ.

I was born and brought up in the evangelical Lutheran Church, baptized when an infant, and confirmed at fourteen years of age. . I attended to the ceremonies of religion, and believed myself a good Christian; though after we had gone to meeting on Sabbath forenoon and heard a sermon, in the afternoon we went to drinking-houses, to balls, and places of amusement, and knew nothing of a change of heart or the new birth.

In the year 1836, at the age of eighteen, I emigrated to America. On the 1st of June I landed in

New York, but soon left for the west, and settled in St. Louis. At the age of twenty-three I was married, and after this went more regularly to church, and put more restraints upon myself, refraining from many of the amusements in which I had previously indulged. I went every Sabbath to the evangelical Lutheran church, and became acquainted with some converted people, and was gradually convinced of the importance and necessity of conversion.

Our minister preached repentance, and brought many so far that they were awakened and under deep conviction; but here he stopped. When some of his members came to him, under awakening, and told him they felt their sins as a heavy load, and wished to get counsel and advice, he would tell them to go out, take exercise, and divert the mind from such serious reflections, and not to think too deeply on the subject of religion. Thus he advised, instead of pointing them to the Savior, and explaining to them the nature of that true faith by which the sinner receives Christ, and obtains pardon through his merits.

About this time brother Jacoby came to St. Louis as missionary, and began to preach. This was in the year 1841. Now, one after another of our people who had been partially awakened went to hear him, and before I was aware of it many of them had joined the Methodist Church. Neither myself nor our preacher liked it, and though I knew that I must be converted, if I would be saved, I did not wish to become a Methodist. We also began to hold prayer meetings in our church; but as a great part of our congregation were not disposed to seek for salvation, they were not willing to have prayer meetings held in

the church, and said if any wished to pray they might pray at home. They would not, as they said, imitate the Methodists. I plainly saw that there was a poor prospect for conversion where so much indifference was manifested; and from time to time I went to the Methodist church. The word which I heard there took effect on my heart, tears rolled from my eyes, and a voice whispered within me, as the preacher described the character of the sinner, "Thou art the man." The customs of the Methodist Church interested me, and especially did I like the practice of calling penitents to the altar of prayer. My conscience told me that this was the place for me, but the name of Methodist I could not endure. Still I went more to the Methodist meetings than to the Lutheran.

Yet how remarkable a gracious Providence overrules all things. One day my wife came to me in my shop, and said to me, "See what a beautiful book I have brought from one of our neighbors." I told her to take it to the house and I would examine it in the evening. I read in this book till midnight. It invited the sinner to Christ, and described the salvation offered by him to the sinner, and taught me that only such as were converted could finally be saved. In the same week I received a letter from two of my sisters living in the state of Ohio, who told me that the Lord had converted their souls, and how happy and blessed a thing it is to be a true Christian. They also urged me to become a true Christian. My heart was so affected that I could scarcely read the letter through. This was another arrow to my heart. They told me they had joined the Methodist Church, and I said to myself, If they have become Methodists,

why may not I? My mind was at once made up, and on the next Sabbath I went to the church with the determination to join.

It was the time of quarterly meeting, and as the preacher was reading the consecration prayer in the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, I became so affected that I wept and sobbed, and cried aloud: "God be merciful to me a sinner." But I did not then obtain an evidence of my pardon. However, I joined the Church. This was on the 9th of March, 1845.

I sought the Savior for five months, neglected no opportunity to obtain an interest in the prayers of the Church, went to all the meetings night and day, and sometimes lay for hours upon my knees calling upon God for mercy. My resolution was to obtain pardon and peace, let it cost what it might, and sometimes I lay for hours on the ground all alone in the stillness of the night, pleading and making my supplication before a throne of grace. As I had thus been seeking four months I became almost discouraged, because I did not obtain the pardon of my sins. I scarcely knew what I should do.

In the mean time the St. Louis German camp meeting approached. I at first thought I would not go, as I had heard so many things against camp meetings. I was willing to be a Methodist; but to camp meeting I thought that I could not go. Yet when the time arrived I thought it best not to listen to what others said against them, but to go and see for myself. On Sabbath morning I went quite early, and when I arrived at the camp-ground the impression was made on my mind that this is to be the place of my con-

version. I was soon so affected that I could neither eat nor drink, but the happy hour for my deliverance at last came; on Sabbath evening, August 17, 1845, between nine and ten o'clock I obtained peace with God. I was so filled with joy that I scarcely knew whether I was in the body or out of the body.

Six months after this I was appointed class-leader; which office I did not wish to take, but a good sister gave me an earnest exhortation on this subject, and advised me to do the best I could. I led the class from that time, and in communing together we had many glorious and happy hours.

In a year after my conversion I felt that I must do something more for the cause of God, but I knew not what. I knew that I could not preach; my work-shop was almost too small for me, and I felt like going out into the world; but then the question would come again, What shall I do? I thought I might be useful as a colporteur to sell books, visit the people at their houses, talk to them and pray with them, and tell them they must be converted. Sometimes I prayed that the Lord might deliver me from these impressions. This struggle went on in my mind during the summer of 1847, and in the fall about conference time I received license to exhort under the administration of brother Kuhl. Three months afterward I received license to preach, and was soon sent out on a mission where the preacher had died. When asked whether I was willing to go I requested two weeks' time to think over the matter, during which I laid it before the Lord in earnest prayer, asking him that if it were not his will that I should go to hedge up my way.

I was at last as fully convinced of my call to preach the Gospel as I had been that I was converted. My labors have not been in vain in the Lord. I have seen some glorious revivals, and hundreds of souls brought to Christ. I have now been eleven years in the itinerant work, and am still willing to labor in the cause of God.

# CHAPTER XXVI

## ERHARDT WUNDERLICH—CHARLES A. MILITZER.

### EXPERIENCE OF ERHARDT WUNDERLICH.

In a small romantic village in Saxe-Weimar on the 2d of February, 1830, I first saw the light of this world. My parents, as well as nearly all the inhabitants of our small duchy, belonged to the Protestant Church, and by baptism in infancy, and confirmation at fourteen years of age, I was received into the same Church. In early life I had a great inclination to learn, and our preacher often requested my father to send me to a high-school. Though he was able, he could not be induced to do so till after my confirmation, when he already felt symptoms of his approaching dissolution. Soon after my departure from home he died.

At the Gymnasium or College every thing seemed strange to me. I felt lonely; yet this resulted in good to me, for it induced me to pray. I shed many a tear, and made many a vow, and had I then been instructed in the right way I might have been converted. But neither the pupils nor our teachers knew any thing of God's grace. The leaven of rationalism had spread through almost every high-school in Germany. The morality of the heathen philosophers was, if not exalted above the Bible, put on the same level with it, and frequently the word of God was

made the subject of derision or mockery. But wonderful are the ways of the Lord. I was not long enough here for the good seed sown in my heart by a praying mother to be entirely eradicated. I had entertained thoughts of becoming a preacher, and was pursuing my studies with this intention, but was compelled to abandon the project on account of my health. For after I had been at the school a few years I became sick, and physicians advised me to engage in some active outdoor employment. I then chose an agricultural calling, but as I could not find a good situation, in the fall of 1849 I came to America. This was a source of great grief to my aged mother, as she believed that by going from under her care I would finally sink into infidelity and be lost. Although at that time she knew nothing of evangelical repentance and conversion, yet she feared God and prayed earnestly, and I am certain that her prayers, like those of Cornelius, were heard. I came to this country careless and thoughtless, and would doubtless have been carried away by the stream of destruction, if it had not been for her prayers and admonitions.

I had, indeed, left my native land with the determination to become a better man; and principally on this account I came to America, because I had frequently heard that there was more religion here than in Germany. But scarcely had I arrived here before all these things were forgotten; and, when God through his good providence brought me among his people in Dayton, Ohio, I was so far gone astray as to oppose religion and persecute those who professed it. Yet it was not long till I was convinced of the

error of my ways. Now, although I had become willing to repent of my sins, I was not willing to become a Methodist. The first time that I went to the altar for the prayers of the Church, after we had prayed for some time, several that had kneeled by my side arose and gave the preacher, brother Ahrens, their hands. But as no public invitation had been given that I had heard, I did not know what this meant, and supposed it to be an expression of their good wishes for the preacher. As I desired also to express my kind feeling for him, I also arose and gave him my hand. He asked me my name, which I told him without hesitation. But how was I surprised when I came home and my uncle told me that by that act I had joined the Methodist Church! At first I felt vexed about it; but I have since often looked at that blunder with a thankful heart, for I might otherwise have gone away and remained in an unconverted state.

As I now had the name of Methodist, I at once determined to seek till I found what they professed to enjoy. I sought earnestly, and after two weeks I found, on the 24th of December, 1849, at the altar of prayer, the pardon of my sins in the blood of Christ. As much as I had previously despised the people of God, so much the more I loved them now; and as much as I had felt lonely in this country, so much the more I felt myself at home, especially among God's people. I wrote to my mother and told her what the Lord had done for my soul, and that I was now resolved to remain in America, and wished that my friends would all come here too. Yet the ways of the Lord were not according to my plan. My mother had not the most distant idea of coming to America;

but, on the contrary, held me to the promise which I made when I left her to visit her again. She told me most positively that if I ever expected to get any thing of my father's estate I must come for it. So I found myself under the necessity to go; and, with a timid and fearful heart, I commenced my journey in the following July. On the first of September, 1850, I arrived at home.

As I knew of no converted person with whom I could hold communion, I thought to return as soon as possible. But scarcely was it reported that I had returned before several of my old acquaintances called to see me. They had been brought to reflection by my letters from America, and had come to inquire after this new way. I then began to witness for Jesus, and to testify of that which he had done for my soul, telling them what he would do also for them, and exhorted them and prayed with them. God, who is strength in weakness, blessed his word, and soon several souls were converted to God and praised him with new tongues. This, of course, excited attention, for never had any thing like it been seen or heard of in this region. The people came out in great numbers to hear me, and I was desired to go to other places; and soon, without my knowledge or aim, I had a large mission. I was called upon to preach every evening, and could not attend to all the appointments, nor could the crowds that came in from every side be accommodated in private houses.

Of course the enemy was not pleased with this, nor content to look on in silence. The struggle soon came; the rabble rose against me, and in many places urged on by freeholders and preachers, so

that they not only disturbed our meetings, but beat me and thrust me violently out of their settlements or villages. The Lord so overruled it that the civil authorities in the beginning looked on in silence, and so we were allowed, in many places, for two years to carry on our meeting without especial persecution. But as the number of believers increased, and my brother and some others commenced calling sinners to repentance, the preachers became dreadfully alarmed. As the opposition on their part could not avail much against us, they applied to the government, with numerous petitions, to put a stop to this. At last the civil authorities yielded to their wishes, and issued a mandate that I was not to speak to the people in the name of Jesus. As I believed it was better to obey God than man so in many places I was fined; in many places I was taken before the magistrate and tried, and then directed to depart out of their coasts; and in some places I was cast into prison.

On one occasion, where I was unrighteously cast into prison, for one week, for I had held no meeting and violated no law, the following interesting conversation occurred among the prisoners. These prisoners consisted of three infidels, that had been put in prison for circulating revolutionary books, and each of us had his own cell, yet we could speak to each other through the partitions. I was brought in about ten o'clock in the evening; and after every thing was made secure, one of them asked another, "Who in the world have they brought in now again?" My neighbor answered, "I believe it is the holy father from Rome!" "What!" responded the first one, "holy father here again! Now do tell me what is yet

to become of Germany? We were put in because we did not pray; and if we get out and go to praying we will be put back here again, for the holy father is here because he prayed too much. It is better for us to go to America, for there we will not be imprisoned for praying." But these persecutions would not have stopped me had I been able to do any thing more; but the every-where-present police watched me by day and by night, and completely hedged up my way. By the advice of my friends, and especially brother Jacoby, in the fall of 1853 I returned to America. Yet I thank God that he not only brought me safe back to America, and crowned my feeble efforts with his blessing, but that he has rendered his word a savor of life unto life in my old home. Many of my brethren and sisters came with and others after me to our free continent.

Though my brother, who took my place in Germany, has had to labor under many embarrassments, yet the mission still exists and prospers, and I hope it will continue to exist in the heart of Germany, where it will be as leaven. When the Lord in his good time shall open the way and many more shall be brought under the influence of his Holy Spirit, I expect to find many a sheaf from this seed sown in tears, in heaven. Many have already been gathered, and among them is my dear mother, who was converted a year after my return to Germany, and died triumphantly three years later. My soul rejoices that I was made worthy to collect these fruits for the heavenly garner, and I have often thought that if this were the only fruit of my labors I should be abundantly rewarded for all my suffering and toil.

EXPERIENCE OF CHARLES A. MILITZER.

I was born in the protectorate of Saxony, Germany, in the year 1831. My parents were members of the Lutheran Church, and consequently I was brought up in their religious faith. They were anxious, as far as they knew how, to bring me up to the honor of God. They taught me to pray from a child, and sought to implant within me principles of morality; but with all this my heart was unchanged, and I was carried away with its unhallowed lusts. From outbreaking sins the Lord restrained me; but dancing, card-playing, and the pleasures of the beer-house were my favorite amusements. I often received admonitions from my father to leave off these things, but my youthful indifference gave them to the wind, especially as I saw that our preachers themselves took part in these things.

I was in early youth deprived of my mother, and in my eighteenth year my father died also. I now stood almost alone; and, as a heedless youth, was carried along by the stream of worldly pleasure. Often the preventing grace of God wrought mightily in my heart, especially when I thought on the admonitions of my father. At these times I often made good resolutions, and sometimes prayed in secret, and would gladly have become a new man; but, alas! I loved the ways of sin. I often promised to forsake my sins, and struggled mightily against them, but I could not gain the victory. The enemy of my soul came to me with the profane suggestion, "You can not help it, God has made you so." But at last God in his great mercy sent me help out of Zion.

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Brother E. Wunderlich came to Germany and preached Jesus the crucified. I had much to say against Methodism, on account of which at first I did not attend the meeting. The chief objection which I had was that the Methodists were too strict, and that no one could keep their rules. Curiosity, however, induced me to go and hear what the Methodist preacher had to say; and, as the sermon was mostly addressed to believers, my prejudices were rather increased. Yet God looked in mercy on me, a lost sheep from the fold; for at the close of the meeting, while they sung, it pleased the Lord through two lines of the hymn to penetrate my heart with the arrow of conviction. These were the lines:

> "Despairing with the ungodly band,
> Midst flaming worlds shall sinners stand."

The words followed me night and day, and I became alarmed about the condition of my poor soul. Now I began to attend Church regularly, not only the preaching, but also the prayer meeting. I was more and more convinced of my lost condition, and God granted to me according to his great mercy repentance unto life. Perhaps six weeks passed away before God manifested himself to my soul. It was on the 24th of June, 1852, when the blessed Savior showed me that his blood had power on earth to pardon sins. O, what peace I found in my soul! I felt that old things had passed away and all things were become new.

The joy which I had in the great Author of my salvation was inexpressibly great; and as the Methodist Church under God was the means of my con-

version, I united with it. When I had taken this step I tried to follow the directions of the Savior. Persecution, mockings, and opposition met me from all sides, but God gave me grace to continue in my course. After I was received into full membership the Church gave me something to do, and I soon took part in Sunday schools, and the distribution of tracts, etc. This I did with joy. But here opposition commenced on the part of the government. Complaint was laid against me, that in my visits to the sick I had prayed with them and directed their minds to the Savior, and for this I was brought before the civil authorities to answer for my conduct. But the Lord gave me grace in these trying hours to cleave by faith unto him, and he never forsook me. In the course of time I was appointed class-leader, and afterward licensed to exhort.

The ways of the Lord are wonderful, and so it was with me. In a remarkable manner did God open my way to come to America. A man who loved God and his cause had made a vow to pay the traveling expenses of a young man wishing to come to America to devote himself to the service of the Church. The matter was committed to brother Jacoby, the superintendent of the German missions. The proposition was made to me, and I at once laid the matter before the Lord in earnest prayer to know his will, and to follow this opening, if it were his will, as a call from God. In Bremen I was licensed as a local preacher. On the 19th of October, 1855, I went, in the name of the Lord, and accompanied by my brother, to the ship, and started for the New World. This was, as I confidently believe, a call from the Lord to labor in

his vineyard. The opportunity to do something for his cause offered itself even on board the ship, where, during a sea-voyage of over six weeks, I had the opportunity to preach eight times to my fellow-passengers. Though I did it in great weakness it was evident that the word was accompanied by a divine power. After I had labored eleven weeks in America as a local preacher I was taken into the regular itinerant work. My faith has often been severely tried, but hitherto the Lord has sustained me. May he still give me more grace to lay myself upon his altar as a living sacrifice! My desire is as strong as it ever was to serve God all the days of my life, and to follow the leadings of his providence.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### PETER MOELLING—CLOISTER LIFE AND CONVERSION

In the Haardt Mountains, not far from Mannheim, there is a small village called Neustadt, the place where I first saw the light of life. There I spent my youthful days, till I was fourteen years old, when, according to the wish of my mother, I went to Speier, to devote myself to the Roman Catholic priesthood.

Scarcely had I entered a Dominican monastery when I felt a strong inclination for missionary intelligence. To preach the Gospel to the heathens gradually grew into a desire in my heart, especially when I recalled the scenes of my earlier years, when I, though a child, often with my brothers and sisters, in the woods, would mount some high moss-grown rock and hold meeting, and, after the mode and form of our reverend pastor, would speak of the child Jesus.

I selected Saint Francis Xavier and Saint Barbara for my patron saints, on account of their devotion to the cause of missions. The biography of the former was seldom out of my hands during my leisure hours, and from that of the latter I learned to pray to Jesus in secret. I availed myself of every thing that could contribute to the study of the ancient and modern languages, in order, as far as possible, to gain a

knowledge of them. Before I entered the Gymnasium there was but little attention paid to religion on the part of the teachers. In our devotional hours we were generally entertained with interesting religious narratives, after we had mechanically rattled off our catechism. Fortunately, the fundamental principles of the Romish faith are put together so loosely that Jesus found great openings into which to lay his polished stones.

The first Gymnasium year I can designate as the most remarkable. I began to think—to philosophize, if I may so speak. The Latin and Greek authors waked up my perceptions and the powers of my soul. The religious teacher, who instructed us in the doctrine of the only true Church, was the prebendary Busch. But if, at the end of the year, I had been called on to say what are the truths of religion, I would have been compelled to answer, "Murder, death, and damnation to Dr. Martin Luther! poison and gall for the Protestants," etc.; together with some proofs from the Song of Solomon, in favor of the worship of the Virgin Mary, and some from reason for purgatory and indulgence. With these saving religious truths, in the fall vacation, I packed up my bundle and marched for home. The days of vacation I spent in Hardenburg, near Durkheim, and there, for the first time, "Schaidberger's Casket" came into my hands. Anxious for books as I ever had been, I opened this, and happened to strike on a passage where a Protestant preacher was most capitally telling his mind to a Catholic. He led him in succession to these questions: Who introduced mass, purgatory, auricular confession, indulgence, and all

such ceremonies? and then answered them from the history of the Church. "Is it possible!" exclaimed I. "Why, Christ taught and ordained all these things." I marked the principal points, with the Scripture passages quoted against the worshiping of saints, mass for the dead, the pardon of sins, etc. The days of vacation being over, I packed together all these truths of the Church of Christ, and again started for the cloister; also I did not forget to take a Bible with me.

When I came back the most of my fellow-students had already returned. The under-regent crossed himself in a monstrous manner, just as I entered the door. I immediately made known my arrival to the regent, who received me very coldly, and in an unfriendly manner. On the following day I obtained an opportunity to read my Bible. The under-regent, who, with Jesuitical cunning, went up and down through the museum—for so the dormitories of the students were called—if possible to ascertain the very thoughts of the scholars, soon caught me at it: "How come you to be reading the Bible?" asked he. "You do not understand what you are reading." "O, yes," I replied, "I understand it to a hair! for Schaidberger says that it is stated in the Bible, 'These things are hid from the wise and the prudent, and are revealed unto babes.' Further, that our Savior himself says, 'Search the Scriptures, for ye think ye have eternal life in them, and it is they that testify of me;' and, finally, Paul says to Timothy, 'All Scripture is inspired of God, and is profitable for doctrine,' etc. Look you, Mr. Under-regent, even these passages will I search after, to see whether they are really contained in this book."

He stood still, as if he would work out in his head the square of the circle; finally, he said, "Good; you may read a little in it, but you must by no means believe that you can understand any part of it; and at the first word which does not appear clear to you, come directly to me and ask for my counsel." I turned over a few pages further, and accidentally came to the third chapter of Paul to the Romans: "And we are justified by his grace, without works, through the redemption that is through Christ." This was now really a "*hic haeret aqua*," an insoluble riddle. Without works, grace, redemption, are justified, through Christ—five newly-discovered continents, thought I to myself.

Now it is, then, true that no one can understand the Bible, or it must be pure nonsense; but that the apostle Paul had written nonsense I was not prepared to admit.

During these reflections my Mr. Under-regent was again at my side. I disclosed to him my embarrassment, that here it is stated we are, by grace and without works ———; he did not allow me to continue: there lay my poor harmless Bible in a corner. "The devil has already begun to work in you! Will you then perforce become a heretic?" I believe if any one had then struck me he could not have fetched blood; I was so terrified. I had scarcely recovered myself when my under-regent and my Bible both disappeared. Now he should have recollected that when children are forbidden an edged tool, they are the more eager to obtain it. So it was with me; I soon again had a Catholic New Testament in my hands, translated by Leander Van-Ess.

What views I now entertained of my Bible no human soul can have any conception. In my heart there was a desire to become holy, that I might finally be happy, and I was especially concerned to become an efficient and well-informed preacher, that I might be able to withstand all heretics. The first passage I opened to was Paul to the Romans, v, 5, "For the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." This passage I immediately read over, till I had committed it to memory, and then put the Testament into my writing-desk.

I now sat down, and instead of studying I recited the two verses which I had learned directly from the Bible. The first point I could not get through with; but the second was clear to my mind.

The love of God, thought I, shall, and can be, shed abroad in our hearts, and that through the Holy Ghost which we have received. Very well: now, in confirmation, I received the grace of the Holy Spirit, and thereby also the love of God which is given with the Holy Spirit.

Finally, God granted me so much grace that I saw that I had only received the grace of the Holy Spirit, and not the Spirit itself; consequently, also, there is no love of God in my heart. If my last piece of garment had been taken from me I could not have felt poorer than I now felt. I already believed myself to be something, but by an examination of these two passages I felt that I was absolutely nothing, whether according to the Protestant or according to the Catholic Bible. When I went to bed I prayed for the love of God to be shed abroad in my heart.

I thought it must be something very desirable to have the love of God in the heart. That the regent possessed this and that the under-regent, Laforette, knew nothing about it, was clear to my mind, or I would not be treated in such an unchristian, cold-blooded, and uncharitable manner.

The poverty in my soul—let me say my spiritual poverty—constantly drove me to prayer, and the more I prayed the poorer and the more restless I became, so that I constantly had great heaviness of heart. This heaviness was soon observed by all my fellow-students. I went alone and prayed, or tried to pray, and I was now only called "the Hardenburg Philosopher." As it was clear to my mind that the priest had not the love of God, and could not possibly have the Holy Spirit, and also certainly could not pardon sins, all of which suspicions corresponded with my extracts from Schaidberger, I felt a great love for this book, and as often as I read it found that its author must have been well acquainted with the Bible. The crisis in the condition of my soul began to unfold itself. Again I opened my Bible and read from St. John in Revelation xvii, 9: "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth." In reading this chapter I was chilled at my heart, and I again had food for reflection, and laid the Testament by. I meditated again, "Seven mountains on which the woman sitteth, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and who is drunken with the blood of the saints." The under-regent just then passed me; so I looked into my "Julius Cæsar," in which there is a minute description of the building of

Rome on seven hills, and asked him if there was any where in the world a city, with the exception of Rome, that was built on seven hills. "No!" replied he, "there is none, unless it is Pekin or Nankin, in China." I had sense enough to know that the evangelist John no more wrote about China than I was writing about the man in the moon.

"Then," said I, "when St. John in the Revelation speaks of Babylon he means Rome." Scarcely had I the words out of my mouth when the under-regent took me by the ears and led me down stairs into the so-called "black-room." Slam, thundered the door to. "No breakfast for fourteen days," was all that I could understand. When I again came to my understanding my first thought was, this trick "the love of God shed abroad in our heart through the Holy Ghost" has surely not played. In the mean time my writing-desk was searched and plundered, all my papers examined, and all my extracts from Schaidberger and my Catholic Testament were found. The anticipation of what was now to befall me made my heart faint. "You will either be driven out of the institution as straight as a line, and then all your conversions of the heathen will be at an end, as you will then not learn to preach, or a hard penance will be laid upon you." Such reflections crossed my mind. What was determined in my case by the high council of the prebendaries and regents was kept concealed from me. I was relieved from my confinement only during the class hours. I was anxious to know what might happen in the next religious meeting. With an air as if he were about to burn Huss, Pater Busch—who may now be a bishop somewhere in Germany—

entered the class. We opened the Canisius, so was our Latin religious book called, and the Pater broke the silence: "*Gratia estis salvati per fidem, et hoc non ex nobis; dei enim donum est!*"—"By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; for it is the gift of God." So he has certainly studied your Schaidberger extracts to-day, thought I, and awaited in silence what kind of explanation would follow. Already in the introductory exercises of the class the lightning began to play over poor Dr. Luther. "How dreadful is it," continued he, among other things, "as Dr. Luther says, 'only believe and thou shalt be saved!' Be a murderer, a thief, a liar, only believe, and all is done, and you are sure of salvation; therefore, he also patched the word 'alone' in the Bible—through faith *alone* ye are saved. Now lay your hands in your lap, faith will take you to heaven as straight as a line," etc. My heart in a moment began to doubt whether Luther had taught such doctrine, for he has translated Romans iii, 24: "And we are without works justified by his grace, through the redemption that is through Christ." This way of justification even now began to be clear to my mind, notwithstanding I had not fully comprehended it; for I yet believed the priest could forgive sins, and the intercessions of the Virgin Mary must help us to heaven, and if no mass were read for me after my death I would in the end still have to wander in hell. Yet, as Pater Busch was determined to break the neck of the little word "alone," and sought out of this to prove Luther's translation of the Bible false, an inward voice did not allow me longer to hold my peace. "Am I allowed to ask a question, Mr.

Prebendary?" asked I. "Let us hear," answered he, with a sullen air. "If I say Mr. Prebendary teaches us religion, or Mr. Prebendary teaches us *alone* religion, what is the difference?" "Out with you! out with you! I will not suffer such heretical poison in my class." I had by the time these words were uttered reached the door, and again thought of the "love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."

I again found myself in my prison. Yet my hours of suffering were to be shortened, for the Easter holidays were approaching, and they were then compelled to let me out so that I could go home. I was admonished, under the most fearful threatenings, to attend the Church regularly while at home. When on Easter-Sunday I went to the holy mass at Weidenthal, to pastor Stoeckel, he delivered a sermon on the Scriptures appointed for the occasion, which interested me very little, for it seemed to me as if a drunken man were blabbering over some religious words. When he came to the place where he was to chant the Gospel, which, like every thing else, is chanted in Latin, I was especially attentive to his discourse. "*Nabelacula fabelacula*," it sounded, among other things, so that it appeared to me more like the Chinese than Latin. O, thought I, if you do not know what you are chanting yourself, of what advantage can it be to others? and at the same moment I left the church.

When I came home I met a Protestant student from Speier, by the name of Kraft, who was an upright, pious youth, and who appeared to me to have something of the love of God; for he was always

very quiet, and talked in a mild, loving, modest, and feeling manner. "God bless you," exclaimed he, when he saw me, and his eyes beamed with joy: "I have heard of your afflictions in Speier, and all the faithful in the town are praying earnestly for you. They are prepared to give you lodging and boarding free, if it is your object to seek the truth. In the mean time you can pursue your studies in town."

At these words it appeared as if a thousand bells were ringing in my ears, all proclaiming the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. "So I may even yet learn to preach!" O, who could describe my feelings then! My next thought was, how can I be released from the cloister, and how obtain my books?

When the classes commenced, I went without telling my parents any thing of it to Speier. I knew that they were soon to emigrate to America, so I easily made an excuse. At ten o'clock in the morning I entered the door of the monastery. The old porter smiled secretly when he saw me come. "Mr. Under-regent has been taken to task by the Bishop for his bad treatment to you," whispered he in my ears. "That matters nothing," said I; "all things shall work together for good to them that love God." I immediately hastened up to the regent and told him that my parents would no longer be able to pay any thing for me, as they were going to America, and that I must therefore leave the cloister and study in the town. Where shall I find language to express the looks and actions of the regent? A satanic rage was depicted upon his countenance, without breaking out in words. Regret at my bad treatment, and rage

against my plans stirred the flame in his heart. With fearful step he hastened into the side chamber, jerked three times with anger the innocent bell, so that it was heard through the whole building. With half-open eyes, and hand on his breast, the porter soon entered the door. "Of Moelling's affairs keep every thing still!" "Do you know," continued he to me, "that a report is spread through town that you are going to become a Protestant? Do your parents know any thing of it? Have you ever expressed yourself so? Who put Schaidberger into your hands? Who, the Protestant Bible? Who has looked out boarding-houses for you in town? Who has given you false views of the only true Church?" "Yes," replied I, "the Under-regent and Pater Busch have done this! You say 'the only true Church,' and Pater Busch said lately *Gratia estis*, 'by grace are ye saved through faith,' etc., and Mr. Under-regent says that 'Rome is the seven-hilled city on which the great whore sitteth.'" "Such nonsense, verily, no priest can teach," interrupted he; "but I know what you have in your head." I took leave of him and hastened up into my dormitory. There I put on all my pantaloons, and what else I could pack on to myself, and the large priest's coat over the whole, with the most necessary books under my arm, and quickly slipped out of the cloister.

My friend Kraft was already standing without, and he took me to the nearest Protestant house, where I was cordially received and welcomed. They were rejoiced to see a young man who was anxious to escape from darkness and to seek the truth and the light of the Gospel.

The consistorial counselor Rust preached on the next Sabbath from Paul to the Romans, iv, 25: "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." Here I for the first time saw clearly what sin and righteousness were. I examined myself closely, and found my own experience to correspond with what the preacher had said.

I began earnestly to seek, read much in the holy Scriptures, and often, like other believers, tried to pray from the heart, but did not succeed; and when I kneeled down it often appeared to me that some one stood behind to disturb me, and I on one occasion arose from my knees in great fear.

Under such circumstances the summer season passed away. After some months I received a letter from my parents in America, through which I was induced to go there also.

Yet ever the words of that sermon resounded in my heart. With fearfulness I stepped on board the ship that was to bring me over the great ocean, no more to see my old father-land; but I thought that in America, where no one knew that I was a Catholic, I would become closely united to the pious.

We entered the sea at Rotterdam. Many a time in the night I stood by the mast with a heavy heart, and sighed to my Savior for peace and the pardon of my sins, for the love of God and the witness of the Holy Spirit. But solitary and lonely as the nightly waves of the rolling deep was my heart.

One evening, as the sun went down so grandly that it would have been beyond the power of any artist to represent the beautiful grouping of clouds, my eye rested on the evening sky; "so Christ will come to

judge the earth in righteousness" resounded deep in my heart. Without obtaining any further knowledge I landed in the New World. My sins made me more restless every day; sufferings and disappointments crossed my path and humbled me to the dust. I felt that my sins and erring ways had brought these sufferings upon me. I sought to pray more earnestly for knowledge and deliverance. I was often very sorry for all my sins, so that I wept in solitary places. One evening when I felt very sad, and was about to leave my work-shop, I looked again into the Bible and read, "Call upon me in trouble and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt praise me." Psa. l, 15. I felt something in my heart in the reading of these words that I had not felt before. There were some forebodings of freedom, the dawnings of grace in my soul. I kneeled down and prayed, which I could now do with more confidence than before. Never had I seen my lost condition so clearly as I did now. I could clearly see how far I had gone from the Savior. What a happy feeling it must be, thought I, to have our sins destroyed and to have the peace and love of God in the heart! I visited all the churches I knew of in order to find this treasure. In the anguish of my soul I once went to hear a missionary preach, but his discourse appeared to me like the prattling of a parrot. He had connected some passages from the Bible with some philosophical parentheses mixed in, and he neither knew nor felt any thing of that which I so much desired.

One evening I said to my mother, "If I only knew a Church in the world where I could find peace I would gladly go to it." "Go once," said she, "over there

to our neighbor's house; there they pray and sing half the night, and are often so full of joy and love to God as to shout aloud." I felt like pushing the sun down in order to hasten the approach of evening; scarcely was it dark when I stood at the door of the house. The door was kindly opened to me, and brother Meekens came immediately and gave me his hand, and asked me whether I too felt that I was a poor sinner? "O, yes," said I, "this I have felt for a long time; but I desire to obtain the pardon of my sins, peace, and the love of God." "Jesus will give you all this, if you are in earnest. We only can pray with and for you." With these words we went into a small retired house, standing back, where they could worship without being disturbed. Soon we had a tolerably large assembly. Brother Meekens preached from the third chapter of John, on the subject of the new birth, and how the sinner must prepare himself for it.

As a Catholic I had been under the delusion that baptism was the new birth, and I thought very strange of the words, "Ye must be born again, or ye can not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Tears rolled from the preacher's eyes, and I felt his words like a cutting sword piercing deep into my heart. Their hymns made such a powerful impression upon my soul that I could not refrain from tears. When the brother had closed the exhorter called for penitents to come to the altar of prayer; I immediately fell upon my knees, and then he prayed with such power and unction that even a Catholic bishop might have become afraid of hell. I melted into tears, and began to wrestle earnestly, and to pray. "Lord, I will not let

thee go except thou bless me: Jesus take my heart and give me thine," was my cry. Our meeting continued with singing and praying, without intermission and without my once rising from my knees, till three o'clock in the morning. This was in the spring of 1847. One more prayer was offered, and this by a child of eight years, who prayed especially for me, as I could not yet believe. "Lord," said the child, "do pluck this brand from the burning! shall he burn forever?" At these words I could take fast hold on the Savior; and who could take him from me again? I could now really believe and know what it was to believe. My sins fell from me as one casts away a filthy garment. I felt that all my sins were destroyed through the blood of Christ. I had the peace of God and the love of God shed abroad in my heart through the Holy Ghost. No brother was so lowly that I could not embrace him in my arms, with songs of praise and rejoicing for all his goodness to the children of men. I now again thought on the promise of the Lord, "I will deliver thee and thou shalt praise me." All my penitential tears, all wrestling and struggling, all anguish and bitter hours departed from me; old things had passed away and all things were become new. "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion we were like them that dreamed." Eight days after this I joined the German Methodist Church, under brother Tostrick, in the city of New Orleans, when the church in the Third Municipality was dedicated.

God be thanked that Schaidberger published his experience; which, perhaps, he did with prayers and tears that many souls might be awakened through it:

with the same view I have written this; and may God, in mercy, grant that all those who read these lines may not depart from the feet of Jesus till they hear the blessed word from his mouth, "My son, my daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee!"

# CHAPTER XXVIII.

## FREDERIC HELLER—H. FIEGENBAUM—F. W FLOCKEN

### EXPERIENCE OF FREDERIC HELLER.

I WAS born in the duchy of Nassau, September 17, 1807, and was brought up in the Lutheran Church, which in that country is much influenced by rationalism. Notwithstanding my religious instruction, and confirmation, and taking the sacrament of the Lord's supper, I became an infidel. When I left my parental home I lived as the youth in Germany are accustomed to live; I often had reproaches of conscience, and formed purposes to mend my life, and thought if there was a heaven, such as the Bible describes, it is impossible for all those who call themselves Christians to reach it.

In traveling through Germany I met with a number of infidel philosophers and rationalists, who regarded the Bible as a book to keep the ignorant in subjection, but was not intended for the cultivated and learned. This was a new support to my infidelity; yet, when I meditated in my lonely retirement, my conscience often waked up, and the word sounded in my ears, "Whosoever believeth not shall be damned." I finally found a true Christian, and made known to him my condition. He gave me good advice, told me to leave off sinning, and

advised me to pray. I then used all my efforts to make myself better, and succeeded in laying off some outbreaking sins, but the restlessness and disquietude of my heart continued as before.

A year afterward I met the same man, and told him that with all my efforts to make myself better I was as bad as ever. He told me that I had not prayed aright; that I must pray with faith. We parted in tears. I had to pass through a wood, and in trying to follow the good man's instruction I kneeled down and prayed. How long I remained in this place I do not know, but when I came to myself my heart was filled with joy and gladness. My burden was gone, and I went on my way home rejoicing.

In my neighborhood I had no one to whom I could open my heart, and through the temptation of the enemy and the want of proper encouragement, I soon lost my peace, and unbelief gained the ascendency. I thought if I were in America and away from old associations, in some lonely place, I could serve God better; but I had not the means to pay the expenses of the journey. Without my asking for it a friend offered to pay my passage-money if I would go, and I gladly availed myself of his kindness. I left my father-land, and after a three months' journey I arrived in Jackson county, Indiana, in the year 1834. Now the impression came, "Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows to the Most High." But, alas! instead of fulfilling my promises I became immersed in the cares of the world, and sought for pleasure in the fleeting objects of time; but I had no peace in my soul.

One Sunday I visited an old citizen who had filled

my mind with prejudice against the Methodists. He was very sick, and was near death. I saw that he was very restless and unsatisfied. As he had been an old Revolutionary soldier, I told him that he had faced the enemies of liberty in the Revolutionary war, and I hoped he would have the courage now to face death without fear. He answered, "No, I am going to the second death; I already feel the flames of hell kindled in my breast. I knew my duty but I did it not." He sent for a local preacher to pray for him, and soon departed. From this time my conscience was waked up again. The solemn warning of the old soldier often resounded in my ears.

There were occasionally German preachers, though not Methodists, passing through our country, but they talked more about making collections than about religion; so I lost my confidence in them, and attended service in the English Methodist church. So far as I understood the sermons they greatly pleased me, but I never became deeply awakened. In the year 1839 there was a great revival of religion in the neighborhood where I lived, and in this revival it pleased God to awaken and convert my wife, and she joined the Methodist Church. This I did not like, yet I thought I had no right to control her conscience. She often went weeping to prayer and class meeting, and wept as she returned. At last it pleased God, on a beautiful May morning, in the year 1839, to bless the preaching of the word to my good. I was compelled to acknowledge that the law of God was righteous, just, and good, though it condemned my soul. The preacher, Rev. Calvin Ruter, presiding elder of the district, showed how the sinner could be

delivered from the sentence of the law; but all the promises of the Gospel fled past me like flashes of lightning, and I could find no ray of God's pardoning mercy in my poor heart. I could neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep. While the Bible informed me that Jesus could help me, the enemy of my soul told me that as I had grieved the Savior so long by disobedience, he would not receive me till I was a better man; that I had tried to become better and had not succeeded. In the afternoon I went to meeting again, but instead of finding comfort my condition appeared worse. I returned home with a heavy-laden heart; my wife encouraged me to go with her to Church in the evening. This I refused to do, for I thought the Methodists had been the cause of all my trouble. I however accompanied her to the church door, and remained outside, among the scoffers, till I became so tormented that I could not stay, and so I returned home. Even here I found no peace, and went back to the church. An invitation was given to penitents to kneel at the altar of prayer, but fear and shame kept me back. Several were powerfully converted, and I again formed the resolution to seek till I found mercy at the hand of God.

I went home, and in the most intense agony I prayed through the whole night till the dawn of the next day. I now felt an entire resignation to the Divine will, and waited with anxiety for the hour of public worship to arrive. In the morning a Roman Catholic man came to get me to do some work for him. I told him that I intended to go to Church. "Are you going to become a Methodist?" said he. I replied: "I don't know; but one thing I *do* know,

and that is, that we must be converted if we ever expect to reach heaven." I told him that we had sinned long enough against God, and I felt that I must be converted if I would be happy. I at length persuaded him to go with me to the meeting. He became awakened through the influence of the Holy Spirit, was converted, and united with the Church. He has since died happy, and his son is now a pious member and steward in our Church.

When we came to the church a hymn was sung, every line of which appeared to apply to my case. When the text was read, "quench not the Spirit," a new world of sins arose before me, and I felt that I had too often grieved and quenched the Holy Spirit. What brother Ruter said in his sermon I know not; but when it was finished I could praise my Savior with a joyful heart. Old things had passed away and all things had become new. What tongue can express the joy of a new-born soul, or what pen describe the bliss of those who are delivered from the bondage of sins? I now loved God and the children of God, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. I loved prayer and class meetings, and was well satisfied with the choice I had made with regard to Church fellowship.

But soon a new conflict commenced in my soul. I had many of my countrymen around me, and I felt a great desire for their salvation. My English brethren soon saw my anxiety and concern for them, and gave me license to exhort. With fear and trembling I commenced this work; and after laboring two years as an exhorter and class-leader I was recommended to the quarterly conference, who granted me license

as a local preacher. The love of Christ constrained me to labor for the good of my countrymen, and I accepted the license.

Though I did not think I could take up the cross and become a traveling preacher, as I did not feel competent for this work, the conviction was constantly dcepened in my heart that it was my duty to devote myself wholly to God: After some severe conflicts and trials, I sold my effects, and in the year 1846 I was received on probation in thc Ohio conference.

The Lord has blessed my labors, and many have been converted to him. As long as the Lord gives me health and the Church needs my services, I intend to devote myself to this cause.

### EXPERIENCE OF H. FIEGENBAUM.

I was born on the 18th of October, in the year 1820, in Westphalia, kingdom of Prussia, Germany. In the year 1833 our family migrated to America, and about midsummer my parents with five children landed in New Orleans. This was the year when the cholera raged with such violence, and scores fell victims to it every day. A gracious Providence preserved our lives, and we took steamboat for St. Louis, which we reached in nine days. We did not remain long in the city, but moved to the country, and settled seventy-five miles west of St. Louis, in St. Charles county, Missouri. Here we were in an entire wilderness, on whieh account no one grieved more than my mother, as she had been converted in Germany, and was now dcprived of Church privileges and Christian associations.

Here we lived five years without a church or

preacher. "Alas, children," said mother frequently, "we will all be heathens yet." We children found a manner of life according to our wishes. Hunting, fishing, and roaming through the forests, was our employment whenever we found a leisure hour from other labors; but with all this our heavenly Father watched over us. We had a pious mother. The Sabbath day was not forgotten; for every Sunday we had to read our Bibles, and she made explanations to us of difficult passages.

I was sorry that we were deprived of schooling, but finally the time came when we were supplied with a preacher. He came from Germany as a missionary to North America. This man was an evangelical Lutheran, and in accordance with the wishes of my parents, I went to him for instruction in the doctrines of the Church, and was confirmed. During the time I was receiving instruction I was awakened, and a few weeks afterward was converted, and felt myself one of the happiest beings on earth. But being left to myself, and not properly understanding the nature of the blessing that I had experienced, nor knowing how to retain it, I fell into a state of indifference and hardness of heart, which continued for five years. Yet God restrained me from outbreaking sins; and as I had, in my confirmation, renewed my baptismal vows and was now recognized as a communicant, I was appointed to an office in the Church; and thus I lived and labored within her pale, a backslider and a benighted sinner, till I was finally waked up through the preaching of brother Swahlen, who was the first German Methodist preacher we had ever seen. He made application to preach in our church, and re-

ceived permission to do so; but when we found that he was a Methodist the door of the church was closed against him by my colleagues, the trustees. But as he had made an appointment and could not get into the church, he took his stand by an old tree in front of it, and preached to the people. His word was not lost upon us: he visited us in our houses, and had he not been a Methodist he would have been received as an angel of God.

I left this neighborhood and went to St. Louis, where I fell into bad company, and made rapid progress in a course of sin. Yet I still went to Church, sometimes to one and then another, till finally I was told that my sister, who also was now living in the city, had joined the Methodists. Through her I became acquainted with brother L. S. Jacoby, and brother Casper Jost, under whose preaching I was again awakened and converted.

It was a hard matter to get my consent to be a Methodist, and still harder for me to go to the altar of prayer. I was afraid that if I were converted among the Methodists at the altar of prayer I should have to shout; however, when the Lord granted me peace I forgot all this, and my Savior was my all, and in all.

In my early youth I frequently had strong desires to do something for the cause of God; especially at times when my mother talked to me about Jesus and heaven. But this missionary spirit died in me when I came to America. However, at my confirmation, this feeling—a desire to do something for the cause of God—was waked up anew in my heart, but I could see no way open for me to do any thing.

When I was converted in St. Louis, the impression again was strong on my mind that I ought to preach; and as I thought over this matter I became very much alarmed, for I now saw the responsibilities resting upon a minister of the Gospel, and the infinite value of an immortal soul. Although the impression was strong on my mind, I felt disposed to shrink from the task. After hesitating some time, and seriously reflecting on this subject, when the providence of God opened the way for me, I started in this great work.

In the fall of 1847 I was received into the Illinois conference, and from that day to this I have endeavored to publish the word of the Lord. I thank God that I ever found the Methodist Church, and that she received me. In this Church I hope to remain till the Lord shall call me home.

### EXPERIENCE OF FREDERIC W FLOCKEN.

I was born near the city of Odessa, southern Russia, in the year 1831. Both my parents were Germans, and members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. They took great pains to make me early acquainted with the saving truths of religion; but shortly after I had entered the lyceum at Odessa, the desire arose in me to unite with the Greek Catholic Church. Several reasons influenced me in this; first, because it was the religion of the institution; and, secondly, because its ceremonial pomp was more captivating to my young mind than the simplicity of the Protestant worship. Without the knowledge of my parents, and in their absence, I observed and practiced all the ceremonies peculiar to the Greek Church, till I had reached

that age when, in accordance with the usages of the Evangelical Church, I became a candidate for confirmation.

I received the preparatory instruction from a minister of the Reformed Church. But my heart remained as cold as ever. I could not conceal this state of things from my parents, for they were deeply concerned about the salvation of my soul. My father asked me, therefore, whether I had experienced a change of heart; and when I had to answer, "No," my confirmation was postponed for one year.

An Evangelical Lutheran minister gave me confirmatory instruction the following year—1846. At its conclusion I deeply felt the necessity of a change of heart, and I verily believe that the Lord commenced the work of grace in my soul on the 31st of March, 1846, the day of my confirmation. Full of good resolutions I looked forward to the future, and hoped to be able henceforth to lead a new life. But, alas! soon all these good impressions disappeared, and I, as well as my parents, could see that old things had not yet passed away.

In the year 1849 I left the parental roof, in order to go to America, partly from a desire to see the new world, and partly in order to escape military service in the native country of my father, the Palatinate of the Rhine. I departed with the blessing of my father, and joined a company of pious Germans, who just at that time were preparing to emigrate to the United States. We arrived in New York the 22d of October, 1849, after a voyage of one hundred days. The first five months of my sojourn in America I spent at the house of Mr. Schauffler, in Boston. The prayers and

exhortations of this dearly-beloved man disturbed my mind to such a degree that I passed many a night in ardent prayer to the Lord. But instead of telling him of the anguish of soul which I suffered, I left his house and returned to New York. Upon my arrival in that city I attended, several times, religious services at the church of Rev. Mr. Gulding, and also at the Episcopal church in Houston-street.

At last, one of the companions of my voyage across the sea, who had remained in New York, invited me to attend divine service at the church of his choice. This was the Methodist church in Second-street, to which afterward I, as well as many others, became ardently attached.

Our dear father Tiemann was the first, and brother Hertel the second, Methodist preacher that I ever heard. The preaching of both made such an impression upon me that I resolved never again to go to that church; for it seemed as if such preaching stripped me of all the moral goodness which I imagined myself to possess. But in consequence of an affectionate invitation on the part of two brethren, who still are members of our Church, I consented to attend once more. Brother Doering preached. At the conclusion of this sermon I felt that there was no soundness in me, but that from head to foot there was nothing but sin, nothing but what deserved condemnation.

When the invitation was given for seekers of religion to come forward to the altar, it seemed to me as if the whole congregation were rising and going forward. This impression was further strengthened by the earnest and importunate prayers which the

brethren offered up; and my astonishment was great indeed when, at the conclusion of the services, I saw myself the only mourner at the altar.

I left the church still unforgiven, but with the firm determination to continue seeking religion at home. I did so for two weeks.

On the 17th of April, in the afternoon, I locked myself up in a room at the house of my traveling companion, and resolved to persevere in prayer till I knew that the Lord had forgiven my sins. I wrestled in prayer three times, when suddenly a voice seemed to whisper in my ear, "Give it up; the Lord will certainly not hear thee!" About to leave the room in despair, that blessed promise of God came to my mind, "Ask, and ye shall receive," etc. For the fourth time I engaged in agonizing prayer, presenting this his own promise to the Lord, and soon received the witness of my acceptance. Rejoicing, I communicated to brother Doering what the Lord had done for me, and was received by him on probation. In the course of the following year brother Hoerner, of Newark, New Jersey, gave me license to exhort. He has since entered into his eternal rest. On the 23d of October, 1852, the quarterly conference of the Second-street congregation granted me license to preach, and in May, 1853, I was received on probation by the New York conference. Since that time I have endeavored to labor in the Lord's vineyard, and am resolved, by the help of God, to continue in his service till my labors upon earth shall be finished.

NOTE.—Brother Flocken was recently appointed to the mission in Bulgaria, Turkey. It is intended that he shall make his native city, Odessa, the center of his missionary operations. He left New York

on the 18th of December, 1858, for Bremen, Germany, where he will probably remain during the winter, and labor under the direction of brother Jacoby, superintendent of the foreign German mission. His family will share with him in the hardships and deprivations of his missionary toils; and the pious should especially pray that the Great Head of the Church may bless their efforts in sowing the seeds of divine truth in that distant land.

# CHAPTER XXIX.

## R. SHOBE—RUDOLPH HAVIGHORST—THEODORE MILLER.

### EXPERIENCE OF R. SHOBE.

I WAS born in Basle, Switzerland, April 15, 1821. I enjoyed the benefit of a religious education, my parents being members of the society of the Moravian Brethren in that city. Among them I grew up and united with them at the age of fourteen. My mother taught me to pray when quite young, and my father gathered the whole family regularly around the family altar. My youthful associates often pointed the finger of scorn at me for attending the meetings rather than the pleasure-parties. But such was the grace of God in my heart that I patiently bore all the ridicule that could possibly be heaped upon me, and found more delight in the service of God than even in the innocent recreations and pleasures of youth. Surrounded by such a religious atmosphere, by the grace of God I was led into the path of life, and taught to love my Savior almost without being aware of it. On the 20th of April, 1836, I renewed my baptismal covenant amid many tears. It was a happy time indeed. I could feel and enjoy the love of God in my heart; and it was my earnest desire to be a humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus.

But, alas! by the subtilty of the archenemy I fell

into his snares. I went to live among strangers, and became neglectful in the discharge of my religious duties. I wandered from God and indulged in the pleasures of this world, till I was graciously overtaken by sickness, when I again heard the voice of the Spirit of God, warning me of my sinful career, and pointing me again to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Conscious of having gone astray from the fold of Christ, and feeling the burden of my sins, I resolved to return to my Savior, whom I had forsaken. As soon as my health returned, and I was able to leave the room, I packed up my things and left that place. When I had traveled a mile or two and arrived at a solitary place, I sat down under a tree by the road-side, took out my long-neglected pocket Bible, and began to read those gracious invitations and promises of a loving Savior that are so full of comfort to a penitent sinner. Soon my soul was drawn away to my Savior, and falling down on my knees, with streaming eyes, I implored the mercy of God for the sake of Him who died on the cross. And, glory to God! while lying there prostrate and unseen by any human eye, God spoke peace to my soul. My sorrow was turned into joy, and I sprang to my feet a new creature, and happy in God and in my Redeemer. This occurred in the early part of the spring, 1843.

In the spring of 1844 I emigrated to the United States. My parents followed me in the fall of the same year, and settled near Hermann, Missouri. There I for the first time heard a Methodist sermon preached by Rev. William Schreck. But as he did not preach very often, and on account of my natural

timidity, I did not become acquainted with him or with the members of the Church, and so for some time longer remained a stranger to the doctrines of Methodism.

In July, 1845, I went to St. Louis, and united there with the Evangelical Church. The following year I took up my residence at Highland, Madison county, Illinois. As there was no regular Protestant preaching, except occasionally by the Methodists, I had no other resort than to attend their meetings. The first sermon I heard there was by the late Rev. Mr. Heminghaus. I was so well pleased with his sermon, and convinced of the pure Bible truths set forth therein, that I gladly and unhesitatingly made use of the opportunity, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church on the same day. All my prejudices were cleanly swept away, and I embraced her doctrines and discipline with my whole heart. As soon as I was received into full membership the quarterly conference gave me license to exhort, in which capacity I tried to serve the Church and to advance the cause of Christ according to the gifts of God bestowed upon me.

In the fall of 1849 I was licensed to preach. I felt entirely unworthy of such a responsible post, and in my estimation not qualified for the proper discharge of the duties connected therewith; yet I durst not refuse it, for I was fully convinced that it was the will of God, and consequently my duty to accept it. When I joined the Church I laid myself entirely on the altar, resolving to serve God and to exercise my gifts to the best of my ability; consequently, after I had laid my hands to the plow, I did not dare to retract my steps. It was my greatest delight to spend

my spare time in prayer and study, and to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to my fellow-men.

In the spring of 1850 Rev. Philip Kuhl, presiding elder on St. Louis district, to which Highland mission at that time belonged, asked me to enter the regular work. This question came somewhat unexpectedly; but still I felt it to be my duty. But there were many difficulties in my way that seemed to be of sufficient weight for me to withhold my consent. A few months afterward I was again requested to join the traveling ministry. I was strongly convinced of my duty to obey the call, and was not unwilling to do so, but my family circumstances were such that they would not allow me to enter the itineraney.

Several years passed, during which I tried to be useful in the capacity of local preacher. But notwithstanding the seemingly well-grounded causes that obstructed my way against entering the regular work, I felt very unhappy and cast down in my mind, for I was so strongly impressed with the duty God and the Church required me to perform, that, as a consequence of my disobedience, peace and happiness departed from me, and I felt most miserable. I prayed earnestly to God, that if it was his will that I should give up myself entirely to his work, to remove the obstacles and to open the way for me; and the Lord did so. All the difficulties were removed and the way opened, so that in 1855 I was received as a probationer in the Illinois conference, and appointed to Decatur mission. Peace and happiness were restored, for I knew and felt that I was doing the work that I should have been engaged in several years before. In 1856 I was transferred to the Cin-

cinnati conference, where I have been endeavoring ever since to advance the cause of Christ according to the ability God has given me.

### EXPERIENCE OF RUDOLPH HAVIGHORST.

I was born on the 20th day of June, 1829, at Radbergen, in the kingdom of Hanover. My father was a school-teacher, and he destined me to the same profession. It was now my desire to become pious in order to be useful. I was instructed and brought up in the doctrines of the Lutheran Church; but as its religion had degenerated into mere formalities, and as there was not one individual that could testify of a heart-felt piety, I did not learn the way of salvation.

Early in my youth the question often arose in my mind, What must I do to be saved? and the answer was, Cease to do evil, and be good, and thou shalt be saved in the world to come. I often tried to become pious in this way, but of course found no peace or a change of heart. In such a condition I lived eighteen years in Germany, and then emigrated to the United States of America, as I firmly believe, providentially. I settled in Mason county, Illinois, where two of my brothers were living. I soon heard of the different sects of religion, of which I had not heard any thing in Germany, and especially of the Methodist Church, against which I was very much prejudiced, because I was told that many of my countrymen had fallen from the faith and become Methodists. I did not then know the doctrines and principles of the Church, and on account of my prejudices I had no desire of becoming acquainted with them.

One day I had a conversation with an unconverted man, who told me that he knew the Methodists very well; that they preach that man must be born again; that they pretend to know when their sins are pardoned, and that they will go to heaven. After this conversation the words "regeneration" and "justification" were so deeply impressed on my mind that I never could forget them. Ever and anon I heard a voice saying, If thou wouldst die happy thou must be born again; thy sins must be pardoned.

Soon after this, in the year 1848, I went to Meredosia, Illinois, where one of my brothers was living. Immediately after my arrival I was laid on a sick-bed with the congestive fever. When I came near death I feared greatly to be cast into hell with all those that forget God, and prayed to God to spare my life once more, and made a vow to forsake sin and to live for him. When my health was restored I tried with all my strength to do better; but, of course, could not succeed, for I did not know the way of salvation, and consequently my strength failed.

Some time after this I moved to Beardstown, Illinois, and visited all the Protestant churches, English as well as German. In the German Methodist church, which I usually visited on Sunday evenings, my sinful condition was more clearly revealed to me than ever before, as also the necessity of a change of heart. But I fell now into another mistake. I considered myself too unworthy to obtain mercy, and tried to make myself better first by reading the Bible and doing works of repentance. I went for the first time to the late Rev. Fr. Kerkmann, and told him my determination to repent for half a year longer, and

that I would then, no doubt, receive remission of my sins. He pointed me at once to Christ as a present Savior, who was willing and ready to pardon my sins *now*.

The next evening I went to a prayer meeting. My sins lay like a heavy burden upon me. I fell on my knees and prayed from the depths of my heart. It was a hard struggle with the power of darkness. But as soon as I laid myself on the altar, my faith was strengthened so that I could believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior. The Lamb of God took away my sins—the love of God was shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, so that I could say Abba, Father. About a week later, in October, 1849, I united with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

When the Lord pardoned my sins I had a strong sympathy for all men, and felt as if I should tell them what the Lord had done for my soul. About nine months after my conversion I went to Quincy, Illinois. Here I became first school-teacher and afterward colporteur, when I received license to exhort and soon afterward license to preach. This was a time of great trial, for I felt my incapacity and unworthiness, but I prayed day and night that the will of the Lord only might be done. I gave myself, at last, to God and the Church, praying earnestly that if it were not the will of the Lord that I should preach for him, to prevent me from taking this responsible office. At the same time I was willing to obey the call of the Church and listen to the voice of the Almighty.

It was in the fall of 1850 when I entered the itinerancy; and, I thank God, within these eight years I

have been permitted to win many souls to Christ. I am fully determined to devote my whole life to this work, and pray that I may be instrumental in saving yet many souls.

### EXPERIENCE OF THEODORE MILLER.

In the year 1830 I first saw the light of this life in the kingdom of Prussia. The days of my childhood were spent at home in the bosom of our family. To go to school and study diligently was my greatest delight, and I know not that I ever willingly neglected Church or school. I lived retired, and never could find much pleasure in the plays of my schoolmates. Yet, as my parents did not take much pains to restrain me, I became a self-willed and disobedient boy. In my fourteenth year, according to the custom of the Lutheran Church, to which we belonged, I was confirmed, and in the most solemn manner renewed my baptismal vow; but how soon was all this forgotten and effaced from my mind! From this time I lived a quiet life, and did not go with my fellow-youth to the dances and plays and various amusements. My place was always filled at the church on Sabbath morning, and my Sabbath afternoons were spent in reading in the family Bible. Yet, with all this, the Bible was to me a sealed book, which I only read because I liked the beautiful narratives it contains. It could scarcely be otherwise, as I had never heard of the renewal and change of the heart in a sinner, and religion was only exhibited to me in Church ceremonies. My dear parents were as far removed from experimental godliness as I was. Through ignorance and the blindness of my heart I often felt my spiritual

poverty, but knew nothing of that better portion. In this condition I lived till I was seventeen years old, when it pleased God so to direct his providence that my parents determined to remove to the United States of America; and in June, 1847, we were permitted to step on the shore of the American continent. My parents, with a number of our countrymen, settled in northern Wisconsin, where we were among the first settlers of that part of the country. Soon after we arrived there it pleased God to lead me to the borders of the grave, by means of a severe sickness, which compelled me to keep my bed for nine weeks. During all this time I did not see the danger I was in had I died in my impenitent state.

In our new settlement we were a long time without hearing the word of God. Thus we lived without God and his grace, and often profaned the Lord's day. Finally we found an opportunity to hear the word of God at the house of one of our neighbors. Here I first saw and heard a Methodist missionary. I knew not what kind of preacher this was; and, above all, I was astonished that he kneeled down for prayers, which I had never seen a preacher do before. He came afterward again, but on account of sickness could not preach. In the summer of 1849 another missionary came to us and preached, and continued to visit us every three or four weeks. It now pleased my merciful heavenly Father to awaken me and bring me to reflection.

In the summer of 1850 I, with a number of others, joined the Church, on trial, at a quarterly meeting. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into my heart, and I was now more and

more convinced by his Spirit of my lost condition. I began to pray and seek for redemption, but at the same time sought to establish a rightcousness of my own, while the righteousness which is by faith in Christ I knew not. I had no peace with God, for I knew him not as a Savior. I now lost all my desires for sinful amusements, and they became a terror to me. Alas, what a condition and what a struggle! The more I sought to become righteous by my own efforts, the more I came to a knowledge of sin. I often kneeled down in the wood, and cried with a loud voice to God to hear my prayers, but I found no rest for my soul.

One day, under the preaching of brother F. Kopp, in the year 1851, I saw clearly that I had not a true and saving faith. I spent the afternoon of that day in reading and prayer. That faith, which is the gift of God, I now was enabled to exercise. I looked up to Jesus and claimed him as my Savior. In a moment old things passed away and all things became new. I now felt a strong desire to do something for the advancement of the cause of God and the salvation of souls. I received license as an exhorter, and labored some time in this office. In July, 1853, I received license as a local preacher, and in the commencement of the following winter I went to the Fond du Lac mission.

Five years have passed away since I started, and I thank God that I stand to-day a monument of his mercy and grace. May our merciful Father in heaven keep his servants faithful on the walls of Zion, and give the grace to declare his truth till the world is converted to God! I rejoice and praise Him that he

hath led me into the way of life, and that I and my dear parents have been permitted to experience his saving power. Yes, we rejoice in that godliness which has the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. May we be preserved faithful, and finally be accounted worthy to sing the song of the redeemed before the throne in heaven!

# CHAPTER XXX.

## GEORGE A. REUTER—PAUL BRODBECK—FREDERIC SCHULER—HENRY ELLERBECK.

### EXPERIENCE OF GEORGE ADAM REUTER.

I WAS born on the 18th of April, 1819, at Trautskirchen, Bavaria. My parents endeavored to train their children, of which I was the youngest, in the fear of the Lord. In due time I was apprenticed to a cooper, with whom I came to America in 1837, and settled near Cincinnati.

At this time the Germans knew but little of Methodism, except that there was a family at Lawrenceburg who had united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, which produced great displeasure among their countrymen. Some time afterward an acquaintance of mine rented a farm near the Cincinnati camp-ground, and attended the meetings at night, in order to observe their doings. This man met me one day at the Lower Market in Cincinnati, and told me all he had seen and heard. I was astonished that there were such fanatics in our enlightened age, and most of all that there were Germans engaged in such a matter.

The year following, 1843, I went to camp meeting myself to witness the spectacle, and as soon as the evening service had begun, my friend, above alluded to, met me there. A young preacher occupied the

stand, and preached on Rev. ii, 5. I listened very attentively, and to my surprise I heard a powerful sermon. I became deeply convinced that I needed conversion. But being a perfect stranger, and not receiving further instructions, I did not know what to do when the invitation was given to the mourners to meet in the tent for prayer, and consequently I kept my seat, greatly distressed in my mind. Presently Dr. Nast and another brother came, fixing their eyes upon me; but I can not describe the feelings of that moment. I was glad when they left me; I considered this as a magic power of the Methodists, whereupon I left the place. While outside of the camp I heard the shouts of Israel, which attracted my attention, and I resolved to go near, but not quite so near as to become a victim of their witchcraft. Seeing their strange conduct, which was a mystery to me, I lost all my serious impressions and returned home.

In the year 1844 a revival occurred in the United Reformed Lutheran Church, in which brother A. Arnold and his sister Barbara Ruedel were soundly converted to God. They told their happy experience to my wife, and on her way home from the church, as she mused on these things, she was converted, without ever hearing the plan of salvation explained by a converted preacher. When I came home that evening I noticed that some strange thing had happened, and inquired what it was. She told me, with tears, what sister Ruedel had told her of conversion. All of a sudden the scenes witnessed at the camp meeting rose up before my mind. A few days subsequently I had a conversation with brother Arnold, when my resolution was strengthened to serve the Lord; and

two weeks afterward I found peace in the blood of the Lamb. This took place in February, 1844, three miles from Cincinnati. We, the young converts, formed the "Zion's Church;" but as we met with many difficulties and opposition, a number of us united with the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Soon after my conversion I felt it to be my sacred duty to preach; but I considered it a temptation of Satan, and an inclination of my own heart, and tried to subdue it. I was rejoicing in God, and went to all my neighbors and spoke to them of the necessity to be converted to God; and it cheered me very much to be the instrument, in the hand of God, of leading some families to Christ.

The way in which I came to make my first effort in public speaking was quite strange. There died a woman in the neighborhood; and her husband, because he could not get any preacher, as he said, to attend the funeral, wanted me to sing and pray. I consented. But as many persons came, he thought it would be a shame if there were no preaching, and gave me a text, requesting me to preach from it. I tried to excuse myself from taking upon me such a responsibility, but in vain. And as there were many of my acquaintances present, it was nearly more than I could bear. The Lord blessed my feeble efforts abundantly, and one family dates their conversion back to this occasion. But soon afterward I came into a great distress of mind for doing a thing for which I had no authority. But, at the same time, I felt greatly relieved by knowing that I had done it in all simplicity, and without any desire on my part to intrude into a strange office. In a

short time, however, Rev. John H. Barth gave me license to exhort, and afterward I received license to preach.

The way was now clear to my mind, and I knew well what was the will of the Lord. Another trial was coming on, and it was a very painful one too. I received a call of the Church to enter the traveling ministry; but my wife was very much opposed to it. I remonstrated with her, but without success. And now the Lord laid his hands upon us and took our little Eliza quite unexpectedly from our midst. Still, she would not yield. Again the Lord visited us, and laid our dear Margaretha upon the sick-bed, and let her come so nigh unto death that I was called from a love-feast in Race-Street Church to come home quickly, if I wished to see her before she died. What feelings were in my bosom I can not describe. I begged my wife, with tears, to submit herself to the will of God, before we had to give another victim. This broke her will; and our daughter began to recover the same hour. This was a clear evidence to me that the Lord had called me to labor in his vineyard. At the annual conference in 1850 I was appointed to Sandusky City, Ohio. The Lord has assisted me greatly hitherto. Sinners have been awakened and converted, some of whom have died in peace, praising God and the Lamb for his redeeming love. I am still on the walls of Zion, pointing sinners to the cross, and resolved to be faithful till the Lord shall call me hence.

EXPERIENCE OF PAUL BRODBECK.

I was born at Bingen, in the grand duchy of Baden, Germany, in the year 1809. My parents were strict Roman Catholics, and I was brought up in their faith, and from my youth taught to observe the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church. Like many others in our old father-land, I felt a desire to see the New World, and in the spring of 1834 came to America, and settled in Erie, Pennsylvania. The next year I was married in the city of Troy, New York, to a young American lady, who was a member of the Methodist Church. Though matrimony is considered by the Papal Church as a sacrament, and is invalid unless consecrated by a Romish priest, I so far relaxed my prejudices and observed the customs of the country, as to consent that my wife should have the choice of the minister who should join us together. She selected Rev. Noah Levings, D. D., who accordingly performed the marriage ceremony.

In the spring of 1837 we moved to Portsmouth, Ohio. I commenced going to the Methodist church with my wife, and gradually became attached to their doctrine and modes of worship; but at the same time I was very fond of the ball-room and the dance.

On the evening of the 31st of December, 1837, we had a great ball in town, and at the same time the Methodists held a watch-night meeting. After spending the forepart of the night at the ball-room, dancing, suddenly something seemed to say to me, "The Methodists hold a watch-night, and you must go and see what they are doing." Accordingly I left the ball-room about nine o'clock, and went to the

church and heard a sermon by Rev. Henry Turner, then preacher in charge of Bigelow Chapel. I listened with great attention, but could not hear any thing that—as I then thought—suited my case. At the close of the sermon the minister descended from the pulpit, came into the altar, and invited all seekers of religion to come forward and kneel around the altar for the prayers of the Church, and seek the salvation of their souls.

While some were going forward for prayer and some were joining the Church, my conscience told me, "You must go, for you are a great sinner, or you will be eternally lost." Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, but yielded to the convictions of the moment, went forward, joined the Church, and threw myself down at the altar, and prayed and wrestled like Jacob of old, till nearly twelve o'clock at night, when, by the grace of God, I was enabled to shout "glory," having obtained redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of my sins. My wife all this time thought I was at the ball-room; and when I came home and told her what the Lord had done for me, she also shouted to God for his great mercy.

My father's family had all practiced dancing, and I was fond of it; and the next day after my conversion my sister urged me to dance with her. I reluctantly consented to do so, not being sufficiently aware of the sin and folly of such amusements. After I had danced two or three rounds with her I checked myself with the sudden thought, What am I doing? I felt immediately that I had done wrong, ran off and left her, and hid myself in the haymow,

where I commenced again to cry for mercy. I went mourning for about five weeks on account of this sin, when at a class meeting God again, for Christ's sake, gave me a conscience void of offense, and I could once more rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Now a fearful storm of persecution commenced against me on the part of my father's family. My father declared that he would no longer own me for his son, while my brothers and sisters disavowed me for their brother. They said I had disgraced the family by becoming a Methodist; but God's grace was sufficient for me, and I went on my way rejoicing. I had a great desire to labor for the welfare of others, and in the year 1839 I received license to exhort, and for five years I exhorted among the English; and during all this time I prayed earnestly that God would, in his good providence, open a door for me to do something among the Germans. Finally, brother William Nast and brother Adam Miller, and other German preachers, came to Portsmouth to look after the welfare of their countrymen in that place. A mission was established, and the Lord revived his work among the Germans. Many were converted, among whom were two of my brothers and their wives, who also joined the Methodist Church. Not long afterward another of my brothers was converted, and became a member of the Church.

In 1845 I commenced to preach in the Portsmouth mission, and in the fall of the same year I was received into the conference and appointed to the Wheeling mission. Hitherto the Lord hath stood by me and helped me.

### EXPERIENCE OF FREDERIC SCHULER.

I was born on the 29th of May, 1826, in the grand duchy of Baden, Germany. My parents were members of the Evangelical Protestant Church, in the doctrines of which I was brought up. My father died in my thirteenth year, so that I and my younger brother were left entirely to the care of our widowed mother.

In my sixteenth year I was put to a trade; and by being thrown into vain and irreligious associations I took part in the wicked practices of the world, and became a giddy and Sabbath-breaking young man. In the summer of 1846 I worked in Schlettstatt, in Elsas. Here, one Sunday morning, quite unexpectedly my younger brother brought me the astonishing news that mother had received a letter from our older brother, George, who, ten years before, had gone to America, and that she was now determined also to go herself.

On the 25th of October, 1846, we left our fatherland, and on the 2d of November we took ship at Havre for New Orleans, where we landed safe on the 30th of December of the same year. Our brother George lived at that time four miles from St. Louis, Missouri, where, for six years, he had been a member of the German Methodist Church, and through the labors of brother Jacoby had been converted to God.

Our journey from New Orleans was a very tedious one, yet we finally all arrived safely at our brother's. The joy of meeting again, after a ten years' separation, was, of course, very great.

In the earlier years of his residence here, my

brother had written that wild game was very abundant, and that sporting and hunting were his greatest pleasure on the Sabbath day; but the letter containing an account of his awakening and conversion was lost, and never came to us. We knew that he and his family were Methodists, but had not the most distant idea of what it meant to be a Methodist.

Instead, therefore, of going on a chase after wild game, as I expected, and wished him to do, he brought out his team and took us all along with him to St. Louis to Church. Gladly would I have refused to go, as I had no taste nor desire for religious services, yet I was ashamed to refuse, and went; and never shall I forget that day. Brother Jost was at that time preacher in the Wash-Street Church. I was pleased with the sermon, for I could understand what the man said.* The light of divine truth was kindled in my heart, and there arose in my bosom some severe struggles. I disputed with my brother George on every point, and sought to justify myself as much as possible, yet all in vain; for God's word and my own conscience were against me. Finally, the last reed on which I leaned—my dependence on my baptism and confirmation—broke to pieces. The sermons of brother Jost struck me like a hammer to break my stubborn heart, and brought me like a poor sinner to the feet of the Lamb. Through faith I was enabled to take refuge in my blessed Savior, in whom my soul found rest, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

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*In Germany some of the rationalistic philosophers have so mystified the plain teachings of the Bible that the common people can scarcely understand what they say.

After I had been received into full membership I was intrusted with a class. Notwithstanding my objections to it, brother Kuhl soon gave me license to exhort. But with all my anxiety and desire for the salvation of others, the brethren could not get me to consent to take license to preach—such were my views of the great responsibilities of this work that I shrunk from the task; and to rid myself of these obligations I removed to Galena, Illinois. There I fell into the hands of brother Plank, presiding elder of the Iowa district. I finally yielded to the judgment of my brethren, and my own convictions of duty, and set out in this work. I have had some hard fields of labor and privations to which I had not been accustomed, but gladly will I endure all these things for the Gospel's sake. I am resolved to spend the remainder of my days in the service of God and the Church.

### EXPERIENCE OF HENRY ELLERBECK.

I was born in Bongolzhausen, Prussia, November 28, 1818. My parents endeavored to be religious, although they had not then any experimental knowledge of religion, and to inculcate correct principles into my mind. Neither preacher nor teacher knew any thing about heart-felt religion; indeed, it was quite unknown in our neighborhood. When I set out for America, my mother said to me, "Keep God before your eyes, and depart not from him, and it will be well with you."

In my early youth I had a great desire for salvation, and sometimes was greatly affected, especially in partaking of the eucharist. There were times when

I prayed earnestly to God to be saved. When doubts arose about my salvation, I comforted myself with my good works, because I considered myself as good as any one, and if I should not attain to heaven, who else would? But, notwithstanding these early impressions, I became indifferent with regard to my eternal welfare, so that when I emigrated to America, I would not have taken any religious book along; but my sister gave me a Bible.

In the month of October, 1844, I bade farewell to my parents and friends, and in the course of a few weeks landed safely at New Orleans, and pursued my way to Hermann, Missouri, where I met my uncle, who had settled there a few years before. He had united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and had become a new creature in Christ Jesus. The Methodists soon gathered about me, and spoke to me about religion, and directed my attention to the welfare of my immortal soul. They invited me also, very kindly and earnestly, to attend their meetings. The first meeting that I attended in this country was a quarterly meeting, held by Rev. L. S. Jacoby and Rev. Charles Koeneke. I was very much pleased with the meeting, and became also deeply convinced of my sinfulness. I saw clearly that I must be born again to be fit for heaven. I could not help loving this people, and so I joined them immediately. I began now to search the Scriptures more than I ever had done before, and sought the Lord, with tears and supplication, day and night, praying him to pardon my sins, to change my heart, and to give me the witness of his Spirit that I was a child of God.

After a few weeks I left my uncle, and took up my

residence in another neighborhood, eight miles distant, where I heard much against religion, and nothing in favor of it. It was consequently not surprising that I found much opposition, and had to endure many trials, so that the enemy nearly triumphed over me. As the nearest Methodist appointment was eight miles distant I could not regularly attend the meetings, but went once in a while, where I was always encouraged to continue seeking the Lord. When I came in contact again with the irreligious people among whom I lived, I became indifferent, and made up my mind to leave the Methodists and to go back to the world. But the thought of being lost forever occupied my mind so much that I fell on my knees and prayed the Lord to show me the right way; and now I can say, to the glory of God, that he heard my prayer, and brought me from this wicked place into a Christian family. Here I again visited the meetings regularly, and sought the Lord more earnestly, till, after a lapse of eighteen months, contending with sin, unbelief, and doubts, I experienced, during a two-days' meeting, held by Rev. C. Eisenmeier, in June, 1846, that my Redeemer liveth. The Lord adopted me into his family, and I was happy in his love.

In my youth, when I heard of the heathen, I was often deeply affected, and wished that they might hear of Christ, and even had a desire to go to them and tell them of the Savior of the world. Notwithstanding all this, I never thought of becoming a preacher. After my conversion I felt as though I should do something for the Lord. At that time I worked in a flour-mill, where I had the opportunity of distributing many religious tracts, and speaking to

the people about their eternal welfare, and inviting them to the meetings. It was my desire for all men to be turned to God; but I dismissed the thought of ever becoming a preacher, for I did not consider myself qualified for such an office.

In 1848 I was appointed class-leader. This office appeared so important to me that, on the day when I should lead the class for the first time, I could neither eat nor drink. The following year I received license to exhort, which I accepted with fear and trembling. In July, 1850, I was requested to go out as a missionary. This caused me a great struggle. I had entered the married state only a few weeks before, had one hundred acres of land on which I could have lived, and was just ready to go into partnership with the miller, in whose service I had been. The bright prospect of a comfortable life came before me, on one hand; but, on the other, the important call of the Church. While I meditated on this subject night and day, and prayed earnestly to God, the thought struck me, If I stay at home and a single soul should be lost on account of my disobedience, how could I give an account before God? This thought decided the matter, whereupon I went to my field of labor. During the past eight years the Lord has been with me, and he has blessed my feeble efforts in promoting his cause. To Him be all the glory!

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### F MERTEN—CHRISTIAN NACHTRIEB—GERHARD TIMKEN—H. SCHNITTKER.

#### EXPERIENCE OF FREDERIC MERTEN.

HAVING been instructed in the truths of the Gospel in early youth, and brought up under the influence of praying parents, my youthful heart received many religious impressions; and frequently when I had done wrong I felt conscious that I was guilty before God. In my fifteenth year I approached with a sin-stricken heart to God, and could also claim his promises; but having no clear conceptions of the plan of salvation I did not exercise saving faith, and so continued to live after the fashion of this world. Although I did not commit open wickedness, yet I continued a worldling. Frequently I heard the warning voice of the word of God. In my eighteenth year I was troubled in mind as I never had been before, and felt a pressure upon me that I could not explain.

I lived at that time near St. Charles, Missouri, where we had a preacher, but whether he was converted or not I can not say, yet his sermons were searching. The anguish of my heart constrained me at last to go to this preacher, who advised me to pour out my heart before God, which I did immediately. I felt only too well that I needed his grace. I continued praying, till it was said in my heart, Be

quiet! the Lord is doing thee good. Put thy trust in God, he will do all things well. And now my load of sin was gone; I felt peaceful in my heart, and enjoyed the sweet and blessed communion with God. I began earnestly to search the Scriptures, and my weak faith was strengthened by the truths of the Gospel, into which I was led by the Spirit of God. I kept on with prayer and supplication, and drew steadily nearer to God, whose love and goodness became so sweet to me, that I regarded my youthful companions and their worldly pleasures as dross, and desired that all might rejoice with me in the God of my salvation.

I may remark here that I did not know at that time what this change was called; nor, indeed, was my ignorance removed till several years afterward, when I attended a class meeting of our English brethren in Iowa. While they communicated their experience, it became clear to me that I had once been converted. But having been deprived of the means of grace, and surrounded with many temptations, I had lost the peace of heart, which grieved me very greatly. I resolved anew to serve God; but, alas! the strength was wanting, and all my resolutions were in vain. All hope seemed to be gone, when I once more experienced the peaceful operations of the Spirit of God. I felt that I was lost, and could hardly venture to pray for mercy, because I had grieved the Spirit of God for so long a time. The question arose now, What must I do? I finally came to the happy conclusion to throw myself into the merciful arms of God. I began to pray and wrestle with God, and asked, Is there yet mercy for me?

then let it be extended to me, a poor sinner. Then I heard a still small voice in my heart, saying, There is yet mercy! Immediately the scales fell from my eyes, and although it was night, yet the heaven seemed to be as bright as day. A new song was put in my mouth, and I could go my way rejoicing.

I kept my conversion to myself, for there was nobody to whom I could communicate it, till soon afterward Rev. Mr. Korfhage, a German Methodist preacher, delivered a sermon in our neighborhood on Rom. i, 16, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ." I had to assent to every thing that was said. The Gospel is the power of God to save. I felt it; but, alas! I had not confessed the Lord as I ought to have done, and resolved now never to be ashamed again of my Savior. I promised to do it at the first opportunity that presented itself; and did it, too, but not without a great struggle. But I realized the words of the apostle when he says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." My heart was filled with unspeakable joy. Since that time I have enjoyed much of the grace of God.

Before ever I had found peace with God, I felt it to be my duty to exhort my fellow-men, and to lead them in the path of life, which I also did as often as the opportunity presented itself to me. Sometimes a thought like the following rose up before my mind: You exhort others, and yet you can not help yourself. However, I commenced holding meetings by singing, prayer, and reading of a sermon. The Lord began to revive his work soon after. The

inquiry was made, What must I do to be saved? My own soul became quickened, and others were converted to God. We were not yet members of the Methodist Episcopal Church at that time, but we were on intimate terms with our English brethren, so that I was frequently requested to lead their class and prayer meetings. And because we were not visited by any German preacher, we united with our English brethren.

Brother Mann, a German Methodist preacher, came soon afterward, and a German class was formed, and I was appointed leader. This occurred in the spring of 1848. Rev. L. S. Jacoby came shortly afterward and administered the sacrament, on which occasion he licensed me to exhort. He gave me also excellent instructions, which I never will forget. I tried to use my single talent faithfully, till a year afterward, when brother Eisenmeier, who was presiding elder at that time, at a camp meeting at Sherles Mount, requested me to preach. This was quite unexpected, and I said, I can not do it! But he encouraged me, and gave me the advice to seek the help of God. I promised to make the trial, if it were the will of God. As I had scarcely an hour's time for preparation, I retired to the woods, fell down on my knees, praying God to give me a text. In a short time the following words were presented to my mind: "For God so loved the world," etc. John iii, 16. This was a good text; but what shall I speak? This was also made clear to my mind. The signal was given, and I hurried to the desk, where all were waiting for me. The Lord blessed my feeble effort. The same day I received license to preach.

In the spring of 1850 I was requested to enter the traveling ministry. I was not willing to go unless I should be convinced that it was the will of God. This, too, was made clear to me. I went in the name of the Lord, and tried to prepare for the first sermon, but I had to struggle with many difficulties. I reached my appointment, entered the pulpit, opened the Bible, when the following text met my eyes, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor," etc. Luke iv, 18. The blessing of the Lord rested upon me, and I could realize that I, too, might claim this precious promise. All doubts about my calling were removed, and thus I continued to labor, relying on God, who has ever been faithful to me, his poor and feeble servant, giving me many seals of my ministry, who have found peace in the blood of the Lamb. To him be all the glory! Nine years have passed since I left my home to be a pilgrim in the world, where we have no continuing city. However, I am not wearied, and am willing to go onward in this way, till the Lord shall say unto me, "It is enough."

### EXPERIENCE OF CHRISTIAN NACHTRIEB.

I was born on the 26th of November, 1825, in the kingdom of Wirtemberg, Germany. My parents belonged to the so-called Pietists, and I had a great desire to go to their meetings. I sometimes attended them, and they produced good impressions upon my mind. We had, among our books, Hoffacker's Sermons, which often awakened me to a sense of my sinful condition, so that I was affected to tears. My father often exhorted and admonished me; yet, as I

grew up, my heart was inclined to go in the way of destruction.

I was carefully instructed in the doctrines of the Lutheran Church, but I was not much affected in my confirmation. The reason of this was the recklessness of our pastor; yet, by the admonitions of my father, I was led to form some good resolutions, and often, on reading missionary reports, a wish arose in my mind to be a missionary, if I only had the grace and the talents for such a work. Some years afterward my father died, and this was another call upon me to repent, and I kept myself away from vain company, and began to pray earnestly; but it appeared to me that the more I prayed the more I felt the sentence of condemnation in my heart. However, as I was one Sunday morning in my stable, I fell on my knees and commenced praying. Suddenly a strange feeling came over me. I felt inexpressibly joyful, and every thing appeared new. All nature seemed to wear a new aspect; but this, alas! did not continue long. I was soon in such temptation that all appeared dark, and I was led to believe it was a delusion.

About this time my brother wrote to me from America, and gave me a simple and plain account of his conversion. From that hour I had a strong desire to go to America; and in the year 1848 I, with a number of others, set out for this country, and by the good providence of God we landed safe in New York on the 18th of May. From thence I went to Philadelphia, where I met my sister and brother-in-law. After several weeks I went to Baltimore, where my brother lived, and in a short time we started together on a journey to the west. My brother re-

be converted. I told my temptation to my presiding elder, brother Nuhfer. He said that he had had similar temptations in his commencement, but directed me to do as he had done. He thought that as the devil had not sent him out, he consequently had no right to send him home. I was, however, permitted to see the fruits of my labor in the awakening and conversion of poor sinners. I could say much of the wonders of God's grace since my commencement in this work, but I must close. My prayer is that God may bless this testimony to those who read it.

### EXPERIENCE OF GERHARD TIMKEN.

In the year 1837 I landed in New York, and from thence went to St. Louis, where I became acquainted with the German Methodists. Our dear brother Jacoby went there also, and planted the standard of the cross. A small number were collected around him and held meetings in a small church in the upper part of the city. I was at that time, 1842, working with a number of young men in a sugar factory in the southern part of St. Louis. We heard of this small society, and out of curiosity we went to hear the preacher. Here I saw what I had witnessed in Germany among the Pietists, to whom my parents belonged. I was pleased with the meetings, yet I could not then gain my consent to tear myself loose from the world.

In 1843 I went to New Orleans, where the late Charles Bremer was carrying on the work of the Lord. Through his zeal and kindness it pleased God to bring me to a decision. Several days before Christmas, during a protracted meeting, I began pub-

licly to seek the Lord; and, seeking with great earnestness, I found him. About a week afterward I joined the Methodist Church.

A year passed away, in which we had many joyful and blessed seasons, and I had many strong and singular impressions that I ought to preach the Gospel. Sometimes it appeared as if a voice whispered within me, "Go and proclaim the word of the Lord." I became alarmed at these impressions, and was ashamed to harbor such thoughts, viewing them as the result of my own imagination. I prayed the Lord to take these thoughts from me, yet the more I prayed to be delivered from them the stronger they became. I finally thought this feeling might be from the Lord. Yet as I was not satisfied on this subject I concluded to keep the matter to myself. Still I could not become rid of the impression that I ought to preach. I went back to St. Louis, and for some time there was a great conflict in my mind on this subject, and I knew not what to do.

Brother G. L. Mulfinger was at that time preacher in the Wash-Street Church in St. Louis, where I belonged. I wrote to him in reference to my exercise of mind and requested an answer, desiring to know whether he thought such impressions came from God or from an evil spirit. Weeks and months passed away and I received no reply, till one day I took up the "Christian Apologist," and read an article on the "Call to the Ministry," signed by G. L. M. The writer directed all those who have such impressions to make it known to their preachers. Now I felt that I ought to go and make known my feelings to my preacher, but still put it off a few months

longer. Finally, in order to find rest for my soul, I went to brother Mulfinger and told him that I was the writer of the letter above alluded to. He told me that the quarterly conference would soon be held, and I could then get license to preach and go into the work. This alarmed me, as I had no idea of going out into the regular work. All that I desired was peace of mind and a consciousness that I was doing my duty. I was, however, willing to follow the openings of Providence and the call of the Church.

I received license at the quarterly conference referred to, and set out upon the work. Eight years have passed away since I began to labor for the great Head of the Church in his vineyard. I feel like devoting myself anew to him, and spending the remnant of my days in his service. May his grace sustain me, and may I finally return again with joy, bearing my sheaves with me when the great harvest shall be gathered home!

### EXPERIENCE OF H. SCHNITTKER.

I was born on the 21st of December, 1833, in the province of Westphalia, Germany. My parents were strict in bringing up their children, and I was duly baptized in the Lutheran Church, the doctrines of which, after eight years' instruction, became familiar to me. My parents sought to serve God according to the best of their knowledge, and regularly read their morning and evening prayers out of Benjamin Schmallkinn's prayer-book. The children also were instructed to read their prayers, but they remained ignorant of the true doctrines of salvation.

After I arrived at my fourteenth year I was confirmed and admitted to the Lord's table, during which solemn service the Lord wrought powerfully on my youthful heart. In my fifteenth year my parents sent me from home to learn a trade. The man to whom I went belonged to a community of Pietists, and he had prayers in his family night and morning. This had a good effect on me. In the second year of my apprenticeship my father died. The last visit I made to my father he called me to his bedside, as I was about to leave home, and extended to me his emaciated hand, and held me for some time without saying a word. Finally, his pale lips quivered, and the tears started from his eyes, as he said to me, "Good-night, Henry." I departed, but with what feelings no one can tell, unless placed in similar circumstances. After I had gone about half an hour I, for the first time, bowed my knees in prayer, with a broken heart, praying God to give my father peace in death. At this time the Spirit of God worked powerfully in my heart. I had some knowledge of the necessity of the renewal of my heart, yet, alas! I was still deluded by this world. In a few days the sad intelligence came that my father was dead, and when I learned how earnestly he prayed in his last hours I had a hope of his happiness hereafter.

In the year 1852 I resolved to go to America, and in the spring of said year I was ready for my journey, and in company with my associates I went heedlessly toward the ocean. I was passionately fond of card-playing, so much practiced on the dangerous sea voyage across the ocean. After we had arrived in New Orleans we started for St. Louis. In St. Louis I

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found, to my joy, one of my friends, with whom I staid two months. He was a member of the Methodist Church. When they had religious services I also attended, and continued constantly to do so. One evening in a prayer meeting I was deeply impressed, and formed the resolution to join this Church, which I soon afterward did. Yet I was not clear in my mind in reference to the necessity of the new birth; my constant aim was to live in strict morality; but, as it happens with all who seek in this way to improve themselves, so it also went with me. Thus I remained an unconverted sinner, being suspended between light and darkness.

The time arrived when the Methodists of St. Louis held their camp meeting. I went to it, more out of curiosity than to seek for God's blessing. In the commencement I did not like the meeting, but as I had no opportunity of returning home I remained at the meeting. Christ, the faithful Shepherd, who had often knocked at the door of my heart, appeared again and wrought powerfully on me through that which I saw and heard. The preaching of God's word, the prayers of the pious, and the cries of penitent seekers, made a wholesome impression upon my heart. My sins appeared as if written in a book before me, and I saw them in a clear light. I commenced praying for a clean heart; but the more I prayed the more fearful my sins appeared before me. Brother Havighorst, when he noticed how I stood trembling under the load of my sins, asked me to go to the altar for prayer, but I refused, from fear that I would grow worse. Again the invitation was given, and again I refused. Finally, brother Kuhl

came along and took me by the arm, saying, "Come, brother, we will find a place for you," and led me forward to the altar of prayer. Now I was enabled to look to the Savior by faith, and as I beheld him my load of sins vanished away, and I became a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Three years I went forward joyfully in the way to life, and then I stood still. That there is no standing still in the religious life my sad experience confirms. I went to class meetings, to church, and to the holy sacrament, and used those means of grace which are helps to the pilgrim toward heaven; but one thing—to my sorrow I say it—was neglected, and that was, the closet of prayer. The enjoyment from above vanished by degrees, and the result was that the yoke of Christ was no longer easy, but was a burden to me—no enjoyment in God, and no enjoyment in the world; what a sad condition! I could not remain in this state. The world presented its charms, and I drew back from the Church. Many a pious heart mourned over me, especially the preacher in charge; and ardent prayers ascended to a throne of grace for me. I was also aware of my sad condition; but again to humble myself, and seek for the lost treasure, was too much for my proud heart.

Satan now sought to make me believe that my conversion had all been a delusion, and thus make me doubt the great truths of religion. Gladly would I have become an unbeliever at that time; yet the recollection of what I had enjoyed in the service of God remained impressed upon my mind. In viewing nature around me, I saw it to be impossible that all the order and operations of nature were the effect of

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Satan now sought to make me believe that my conversion had all been a delusion, and thus make me doubt the great truths of religion. Gladly would I have become an unbeliever at that time; yet the recollection of what I had enjoyed in the service of God remained impressed upon my mind. In viewing nature around me, I saw it to be impossible that all the order and operations of nature were the effect of

blind chance. Night and day I was tormented with fears. When I lay down at night, my conscience told me that if I should die to-night I am a child of perdition. I could not live in this way, and again longed for the liberty of the children of God; yet to my disgrace be it said that for more than two months I lived in the sinful delusions of the world. As often as I think of it I feel like thanking God that he did not call me to judgment in this condition.

The St. Louis camp meeting of 1855 approached, and I went with firm reliance on the mercy of God that he would again receive me. With my sorrowful and heavy-laden heart I saw the place where I had first been permitted to feel the power of the world to come. Deeply pained at the recollection of my backsliding, I wept and prayed, and went all day long with my head bowed down. I was tempted to believe that I had committed an unpardonable sin, and was on the borders of despair; yet, blessed be God! Christ can impart the gifts of his grace to the rebellious also. Near the close of the camp meeting I received power to believe again, Jesus was mine, his blood and merits were mine, and I was saved! The language of my heart was then, and still is, Praise the Lord for his mercy! I now felt that God had a work for me to do, and I did not close my ears to the heavenly calling. I entered the conference, and am now endeavoring to point out the way of life to my fellow-men.

May this testimony to the grace and mercy of God be made a blessing to all who read it!

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### STATISTICS OF GERMAN METHODISM.

It will be a matter of great interest to all who are looking for the spiritual regeneration of Germany, to glance at the progress and triumphs of the evangelical party for the past ten years. After the revolutions of 1848, it was greatly feared by the comparatively few men of this party, that the forming and molding of the new Church relations would, in a good degree, fall into the hands of those who were the avowed enemies of true religion and ungodly in their lives. When a proposition was made for a General Synod, to be convened at Berlin, such was the fear of the truly-evangelical party with regard to the preponderating influence of the rationalistic element, that the Rev. Frederic Ringsdroff published the following protest against sending delegates to the proposed synod. He says:

"The state is now abolishing the connection in which it has hitherto stood to the Church, and promises, in future, to abstain from all meddling with ecclesiastical affairs. It has therefore been proposed to convoke a General Synod, in order to consult and fix upon a new organization of the Evangelical Church. The resolutions passed by this Synod are expected to be concurred in by the people. According to the plan proposed, all the members of the Evangelical

Church, that is, all who call themselves evangelical, have the right to elect the delegates to the General Synod.

"But who can not see that if the proposed synod shall effect any good, the election must take place according to the principle laid down in Acts vi, 3, where St. Peter required that the deacons that were to be selected should be men full of wisdom and of the Holy Ghost! But, alas! the proposed election is to be founded on entirely different principles. Every one who is not under civil censures, that is, all those who have never been accused of theft, murder, etc., have the right to vote for the delegates. They must, indeed, call themselves evangelical. But what kind of characters do we find among those who call themselves evangelical?

"Answer 1. Openly-vicious men, drunkards, fornicators, adulterers, etc.

"2. Such of whom the Bible says, they are liars and antichrists. 1 John ii, 22. Many call themselves evangelical who openly deny the supernatural conception of Christ, the atoning efficacy of his blood, shed on the cross, and the fact of his resurrection from the dead and ascension to heaven.

"3. Such as, although they are not open enemies of Christianity, yet show, by their walk and conversation, an entire indifference toward the Lord and his word. Though orthodox in profession, you find them, on Sunday, in the tavern, in the theaters, at the card-table, etc. You hear them profane the name of God, and you never see them blush but when they happen to sit down at a table where a blessing is asked, or the name of Jesus is mentioned.

"Now, inasmuch as the characters mentioned under numbers 1, 2, and 3, form the great majority, and the true members of the mystical body of Christ only a small minority, in the Evangelical Church, what can we expect? Answer. Nothing else but that the open and secret enemies of the cross will have the ascendency in the General Synod, and that the Lord and his word will not be glorified by that assembly, but rather be put to open shame. Therefore, brethren, let us pray, and prevent, if possible, the coming together of a General Synod, which will be like that in which the high-priest, and through him Satan himself, presided, and in which the Son of God was declared a blasphemer, and the holy One condemned to the ignominious death of the cross.

"Brethren, if you do not wish to hear soon from Berlin a proclamation, either in an open and undisguised manner, or concealed under fair and hypocritical terms, to the effect, that the venerable creed of the Reformers, which they have sealed with their blood, are old wives' fables, unworthy of the intelligence of our age—if you do not wish this, then you must needs take the sword of the Spirit, and contend earnestly, in private and public, with the word of God, with prayer and supplication, against this proposed General Synod. Brethren, be not deceived! You know how long the hearts of believers have longed and prayed that another and a better time might come for the Church of God; that a Church discipline, founded upon the word of God, might stem the torrent of ungodliness, and prevent the profanation of the Lord's supper. But the proposed General Synod is not the tree which will bear the sweet fruit of evan-

gelical spirit and zeal, namely, an apostolic Church discipline. Those longings which the Spirit of God produced in our hearts will, in all probability, rebound from the hearts of that assembly, like an arrow from an iron shield. How, indeed, should those who have gone so long without any restraint, want to have any thing to do with Church discipline?

"But what shall we do if, in a few days or weeks, we shall be invited by our superiors to take part in the formation of this Synod? I answer, let us resolutely protest against it, and have nothing to do with it; for the word of God tells us plainly, not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers; and what communion hath light with darkness? Therefore, let us pray, testify, warn; and if the moment arrives when violence shall usurp the place of right, we will not be guilty of having slept when it was our duty to watch, pray, and labor. And may the Lord—the crucified and risen Lord—who still sits upon the throne, and whose scepter no revolution can take away, look upon us in mercy, and strengthen his people, that they may stand firm as a rock in these perilous times!"

It is only ten years ago since this protest was made against the calling of a General Synod, from a fear that the infidelity of a majority of the clergy might exert a blasting and deleterious influence upon the interests of religion. But in what condition do we find the German Protestant Church now? A wonderful change has been effected in the last ten years. The monster, Rationalism, has been crushed under the ponderous weight of Gospel truth.

"Within the memory of many yet living the ortho-

dox Professor Knapp, at Halle, who had seven hundred theological students, wrote to a Moravian brother: 'The Lord answered my prayer to give me one scholar that believes in Christ.' Not many years ago Dr. Tholuck had to complain: 'The professed ministry of Christ has destroyed the temple of their Lord. The doctors of divinity, clad in their official robes, with violent hands have torn the Lord Jesus from his throne, and placed in his stead a phantom, which they call reason.' But, thanks be to God! 'they are dead which sought the young child's life.' The Spirit of the Lord swept again through the length and breadth of the land of the Reformation, and the dry dead bones that have been buried for half a century in the sand of a lifeless orthodoxy, and for another half century in the dark caverns of infidelity, were brought to life. Rationalism is now totally overthrown and put to shame and confusion, not only by the theological but by the philosophical schools of Germany. From the cathedra and the pulpit, from popular and learned literature, from universities and common schools, even from some ecclesiastical consistories and royal courts, streams of living water are proceeding, refreshing many thirsty souls, and promising to change the wilderness into a garden of the Lord. Frederic the Great, Voltaire's companion, had called a theologian an animal without reason, and, behold! his descendant invites the evangelical Christians of all countries to hold a conference in his capital, attends that conference in person, and desires, individually, to shake hands with the members of the Alliance in his own palace. Well did the president of the Alliance, in addressing the king, remark: 'His

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majesty had seen many imposing armies, but never one like the present—an army not arrayed in ordinary military attire, but ready to fight the battles of the King of kings with the sword of the Spirit, the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation.' Truly a little one became a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. The Lord hastened it. What a marvelous change!" (Dr. Nast, in Methodist Quarterly Review, July, 1858, page 434.)

Should more liberal principles gain an ascendency, and free and unrestricted religious liberty be given to those outside of the pales of the National Church, there will be a great and effectual door opened to the Methodist Episcopal Church, with her itinerating system and religious publications.

As another indication of the great change which has taken place in a few years past, we may refer to the fact that the German committee of the Evangelical Alliance, consisting of Dr. Krummacher, Prelate Kapff, Dr. Von Hoffman, and other distinguished divines, invited Dr. Nast to meet them at the World's Convention, and address that distinguished body on American Methodism. Nothing can more clearly indicate a disposition and even a *strong* desire on the part of the committee to have an impartial report, than the fact that Dr. Nast was appointed to deliver his address immediately after the report of Professor Schaff, of Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, on Religion in America; especially when it was known that the Professor had entertained and expressed unfriendly sentiments toward German Methodism. The marked attention and the unanimous response of a hearty amen from the large assembly, together with the warm

expressions of brotherly fellowship to Dr. Nast at the close of his address by some of the most distinguished ministers of the Lutheran Church, all evince a deep interest in the progress of vital godliness. In addition to this they invoked the blessing of the Lord upon our mission work among the Germans, and asked brother Nast for our Discipline and our principal German Methodist publications, which, as he told them in his address, his German brethren in America had furnished him for gratuitous distribution. The German committee also offered to pay brother Nast's traveling expenses, which offer his German brethren generously refused, preferring to pay his expenses, as well as make the donation of books above referred to; thus giving evidence of the deep interest they feel in letting their father-land know what blessings they have received through the influence of Methodism.

I will mention in this connection one more favorable indication for the spread of spiritual light in Germany. They are now publishing a new Evangelical Church paper, as the organ of the Evangelical Alliance, and Dr. Nast has been invited to become a contributor to it, thus opening another door for the spread of evangelical truth in Germany.

We here present an exhibit of German Methodism, for which we are indebted to Dr. Nast:

"German Methodism, when dated from the formation of the first German Methodist society, reported to the Ohio conference in the fall of 1838, is just twenty years old. The writer of this was then the only missionary, and reported 30 members to the conference. Now we have, inclusive of probationers,

19,980 in Church fellowship. Our increase during the past year was 2,722, while 171 took their transfer from the Church militant to the Church triumphant. During the twenty years of its existence the German work has had, on an average, a net increase of 1,000 per year. But if we would count those of our members, who, during these twenty years, have died in the Lord, and those who, after the division of the Church, fell under the care of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and those of our children who joined the English Church, the whole addition of German members to the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the space of twenty years, would be about 25,000.

"Again, our own Church—for we shall, in our further remarks, take no more notice of the German work in the Church South—has employed during the twenty years, on an average, every succeeding year, 12 missionaries more, so that their number is now 240. We have 281 houses of worship, and 111 parsonages, valued at $508,063, which would make an addition of about $25,000 worth of Church property per year, for twenty years.* In the acquisition of Church property the Germans have, at least, during the last ten years, borne as heavy a part of the burden as members of the Church generally have to bear in building houses of worship and parsonages. Our American brethren have no conception how much our German members give in this respect; how every society is visited by one or more German agents every year. Many of our missions would have made them-

* To give a correct statemont of Church property, the remaining debt should, also, be reported to conference; but it is done only in a few conferences, and I could, therefore, not mention it here.

selves free from the support of the Missionary Society at an earlier period, or to a greater extent, had it not been for their heavy responsibilities in building churches.

"Our Sunday school exhibit is also cheering, with the exception of one point. The number of our scholars is too small, compared with the number of teachers. We have 357 schools, 3,251 teachers and officers, 14,124 scholars, and 37,052 books in the libraries. We ought to do much more for the rising generation of the German population of this country; but we have to contend with many difficulties, one of which is a lack of sufficient sympathy and interest on the part of our own Church in behalf of the *German* Sabbath schools connected with her missions, arising from the often-expressed fear that our German Sabbath schools will have the tendency unnecessarily to perpetuate the German language in this country. This fear is *unfounded.* There is no danger of our German children not learning the English language, though we may not give them English instruction in our own German Sabbath schools. They have ample opportunity to learn English in our public schools, and attend, wherever it is practicable, the English Sabbath schools of our Church, besides our German mission schools. If it were not so, if the fear I have alluded to were well grounded, why are our often-repeated appeals to our American brethren, to furnish us with male and female teachers, to form English classes in our Sunday schools, so seldom successful? The truth is, that such service, valuable as it would be to us in many respects, can not take the place of the work which, in the providence of God, we are called

to do for the children of our countrymen. To do good to the rising generation of the German population *out of our Church*, among whom we are sent as missionaries, and thereby to gain the hearts of the parents, we must be prepared to give them *German instruction in our Sabbath schools.* The opportunities and inducements for German youth to be trained up in irreligious principles, through the medium of their mother tongue, are so many and so strong, that, if we do not make earnest efforts to bring the German youth under *German*, as well as English religious influence, their German associations will make them the prey of pernicious principles.

"There is another reason why we need German Sabbath schools: The German immigration to this country will not cease for some time to come; we have only begun to throw the leaven of the Gospel among them; we have a greater work before us than what, by the grace of God, we have been able to do. But we can not do it without the coöperation of the rising generation, born and trained up by pious parents, such as we hope will be the case with a great part of our children, of whom 2,445 were during the last year dedicated to the Lord in baptism. Some of them will become German missionaries, class-leaders, and Sunday school teachers; but we need *for this purpose* German schools. Will any American brother be so hard-hearted as to deprive the German mission work *of all this seed-corn?* You may be sure that the greater portion of the children of German Methodists, when they are grown up men and women, will be, if at all religious, members of our English charges, and scarcely any of our grand-

children will be found in a German Church. But do not begrudge us to keep a part of the second crop of our German missionaries as seed-corn for the conversion of successive immigrations.

"I have thus glanced at the prominent points of the *statistical tables*, and I hope the reader will be induced to look at the details. In giving the total number of the membership I added together full members, probationers, and local preachers. In calculating the net increase of membership I followed the same rule, adding the number of full members to the probationers and local preachers, as given in the Minutes of the preceding year, and deducting it from the sum total of this year."

STATISTICS OF MEMBERSHIP, ETC.

| Conferences. | Districts | Stations, Circuits, and Missions | Itinerant preachers | Membership. | | | Total of membership. | Deaths | Total increase of membership |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Local preachers | Members | Probationers | | | |
| New York | 2 | 24 | 24 | 21 | 1,473 | 542 | 2,046 | 10 | 217 |
| Rock River | 3 | 34 | 39 | 19 | 2,072 | 766 | 2,857 | ... | 425 |
| Upper Iowa | 2 | 18 | 23 | 17 | 1,011 | 424 | 1,452 | 10 | 238 |
| Cincinnati | 2 | 22 | 28 | 23 | 2,420 | 337 | 2,780 | 27 | 164 |
| North Ohio | 2 | 24 | 27 | 14 | 1,702 | 417 | 2,133 | 13 | 444 |
| South-Eastern Indiana | 3 | 23 | 27 | 34 | 2,627 | 547 | 3,208 | 43 | 406 |
| Illinois | 3 | 31 | 36 | 28 | 1,827 | 481 | 2,336 | 24 | 320 |
| Southern Illinois | 2 | 19 | 22 | 25 | 1,678 | 316 | 2,019 | 26 | 200 |
| Home work | 19 | 195 | 226 | 181 | 14,810 | 3,740 | 18,831 | 153 | 2,414 |
| California (1857) | 1 | 3 | 3 | ... | 42 | 18 | 60 | 1 | ..... |
| Germany | ... | ..... | 11 | 10 | 755 | 324 | 1,089 | 17 | 308 |
| Total | 20 | 198 | 240 | 191 | 15,607 | 4,182 | 19,980 | 171 | 2,722 |

In addition to this satisfactory exhibit of the number of preachers and members in the different conferences, we present, from the same source, a table

showing the means employed for extending the influence of Methodism among our foreign population:

STATISTICS OF CHURCH PROPERTY, ETC.

| Conferences. | Churches | Parsonages | Value of Church property | Sunday Schools | Officers and Trustees | Scholars | Books in Library | Baptisms. Adults | Baptisms. Children |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| New York | 26 | 7 | $79,750 | 36 | 463 | 2,695 | 4,767 | 4 | 429 |
| Rock River | 44 | 25 | 83,600 | 60 | 558 | 1,955 | 4,684 | ... | ..... |
| Upper Iowa | 19 | 9 | 26,500 | 28 | 219 | 754 | 1,811 | ... | 285 |
| Cincinnati | 40 | 11 | 71,660 | 44 | 443 | 1,703 | 7,975 | 1 | 385 |
| North Ohio | 31 | 16 | 53,300 | 44 | 433 | 1,829 | 5,956 | 5 | 334 |
| South-Eastern Indiana | 46 | 16 | 50,243 | 51 | 384 | 1,556 | 4,059 | 11 | 367 |
| Illinois | 39 | 12 | 65,600 | 40 | 335 | 1,348 | 3,464 | 5 | 337 |
| Southern Illinois | 31 | 15 | 41,410 | 32 | 248 | 989 | 2,887 | ... | 272 |
| Home work | 276 | 111 | $472,063 | 335 | 3,083 | 12,831 | 35,603 | 26 | 2,409 |
| California (1857) | 3 | ... | 13,000 | 3 | 31 | 105 | 533 | ... | 35 |
| Germany | 2 | ... | 23,000 | 19 | 137 | 1,190 | 916 | ... | 1 |
| Total | 281 | 111 | $508,063 | 357 | 3,251 | 14,124 | 37,052 | 26 | 2,445 |

Dr. Nast presents a detailed view of the financial condition of German Methodism, of which we can give only the summary. He says:

"The German membership in the states—not reckoning the infant work in California and Germany—amounting to 18,831, gave, in the last conference year, for the support of the ministry, $44,872.92—per member, $2.43, 7 mills; for conference claimants, $1,490.52—per member, 6 cents, 4 mills; for Missionary Society, $6,946.09—per member, 33 cents, 3 mills; for tract cause, $501.26—per member, 2 cents, 5 mills; for Bible Society, $590.75—per member, 3 cents, 1 mill; for Sunday School Union, $346.57—per member, 1 cent, 8 mills. For all these objects together, $53,920.68—per member, $2.90.5.

"This exhibit is certainly creditable to the German work. It shows the hearty good-will of a poor people to do at least *something* for *each* of the benevolent objects presented by the Church. Might not our brethren in the ministry make good use of our exhibit in taking up their various collections, by examining the Minutes of their respective conferences and comparing the contributions of their societies, per member, with what the Germans give, per member? Yet we wish not to be understood as if we thought we had any thing to glory of. On the contrary, we published the financial survey of the German work in the Apologist for the purpose of showing our membership *how far we are still behind in the support of the Gospel*, and *to stimulate to greater exertions.*

"With the above-mentioned reduced appropriations, if we estimate the support of a German missionary—we have scarcely any single men—at $500 in the New York conference, and at $400 in the western conferences, the Germans will have to raise, during the present conference year, for the support of their ministry, *per member*, in the New York conference, $1.96; in Rock River, $4.06; in Upper Iowa, $3.59; in Cincinnati, $2.76; in North Ohio, $2.72; in South-Eastern Indiana, $2.43; in Illinois, $4.45; in Southern Illinois, $2.87; or at an average, taking the whole German work together, in those eight conferences, per member, $3.11—not reckoning house-rent, moving, and traveling expenses.

"In the English work of the Cincinnati conference the number of preachers is 140, and of members, 30,663. The average amount paid by each member

for the support of the ministry is $1.94; for conference claimants, 4 cents, 8 mills; for missions, 39 cents, 8 mills; for the Tract Society, 1 cent; for the Bible Society, 4 cents, 2 mills; for the Sunday School Union, 1 cent. The general average for all purposes is $2.48, 2 mills.

"Is this not as much as should be expected from the German members with their present numbers? Some promising new German mission fields in the different conferences could not be taken up this year; other fields had to be contracted, and should another deduction in the appropriations be thought necessary by the General Mission Committee, to make out the annual appropriations, *the German mission work must be seriously injured, and its extension beyond its present limits prevented.* In consequence of being under the necessity of curtailing our home work, there are already five missionaries less employed than last year!

"Those who are under the impression that, in view of our mission funds being needed for China, India, and other foreign missions, the appropriations for the German work in this country ought to be still less, and that the German membership ought to do still more for the support of the Gospel, I would ask to compare the amount of the contributions of the German membership of the Cincinnati conference, with those of the English membership of the same conference, as shown in the statistics. The Cincinnati conference, we may suppose, will give, as nearly as any other, the average amount of the contributions of the English membership in general. The reader will see that the *Germans give per member more than the English* for the support of the ministry, as well as

for conference claimants, and the different benevolent institutions of the Church, with the exception of the Bible Society, for which both happen to give equally.

"But some may say, 'if the Germans give so much more than the English, the contrary of what *you* wish to prove follows; that is, the German preachers are paid better, and should not need the help of the Missionary Society any longer.' This would certainly be the case, if the number of the members were the same in the German and English part. But how vast is the difference! The English membership of the Cincinnati conference is 30,663; that of the German membership only 2,780. Whoever will think of this fact, will see at once that the German preacher can not get so full a support as the English. And there is another vast difference in the *ability* to give, which exists between the German and English membership. That part of the German population which belongs to our Church is, with few exceptions, so poor that, were they members of the English Church, scarcely any contribution would be expected of them. How different is the case with our American brethren! How few of them are so poor as the majority of German members! How many of them are rich, wealthy, or at least competent! *And yet they give less per member than their German brethren.* If they would give for the missionary cause per member as much as the Germans give per member, none of our foreign or home missions would need to be curtailed.

"In connection with this exhibit of German Methodism, I would, also, state to what extent the German Methodists in this country support the publications

of our Church. The Apologist has a subscription of 8,900; the Sunday School Bell, 11,100, among a membership of not quite 19,000. According to an exhibit made by our Western Book Agents, there were sold, in the year 1857, of our own German publications, 37,822 bound volumes, containing 8,196,753 pages, and 2,056,400 pages of tracts, and 4,854 volumes of religious books, imported from Germany."

In thus looking at the progress of German Methodism, both here and in the father-land, we are led to exclaim, "What hath not God wrought!" But we confidently believe that these are only the beginnings of a work still greater; and that the next generation will behold results almost beyond our conception. May the good Lord, who has hitherto sustained his servants in their weakness, be with them in his power, and grant unto them, according to the riches of his glory, every gift and grace in their efforts to "spread Scriptural holiness over these lands!"

THE END.